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THE SUSSEX EDITION OF THE COMPLETE
WORKS IN PROSE AND VERSE OF
RUDYARD KIPLING

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VOLUME XXXIV

SONGS FROM BOOKS
AND
LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

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Songs from Books was first published in 1913

SONGS FROM BOOKS
AND CHAPTER HEADINGS

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PREFACE

I HAVE collected in this volume practically all the verses and chapter headings scattered through my books. In several cases where only a few lines of verse were originally used, I have given in full the song, etc., from which they were taken.

RUDYARD KIPLING

‘CITIES AND THRONES AND POWERS’

*CITIES and Thrones and Powers
Stand in Time's eye,
Almost as long as flowers,
Which daily die:
But, as new buds put forth
To glad new men,
Out of the spent and unconsidered Earth
The Cities rise again.*

*This season's Daffodil,
She never hears
What change, what chance, what chill,
Cut down last year's;
But with bold countenance,
And knowledge small,
Esteems her seven days' continuance
To be perpetual.*

*So Time that is o'er-kind
To all that be,
Ordains us e'en as blind,
As bold as she:
That in our very death,
And burial sure,
Shadow to shadow, well persuaded, saith,
'See how our works endure!'*

SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE RECALL

THE RECALL

I AM the land of their fathers,
In me the virtue stays.
I will bring back my children,
After certain days.

Under their feet in the grasses
My clinging magic runs.
They shall return as strangers.
They shall remain as sons.

Over their heads in the branches
Of their new-bought, ancient trees,
I weave an incantation
And draw them to my knees.

Scent of smoke in the evening,
Smell of rain in the night—
The hours, the days and the seasons,
Order their souls aright,

Till I make plain the meaning
Of all my thousand years—
Till I fill their hearts with knowledge,
While I fill their eyes with tears.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

PUCK'S SONG

SEE you the ferny ride that steals
Into the oak-woods far?
Oh, that was whence they hewed the keels
That rolled to Trafalgar!

And mark you where the ivy clings
To Bayham's mouldering walls?
Oh, there we cast the stout railings
That stand around St. Paul's!

See you the dimpled track that runs
All hollow through the wheat?
Oh, that was where they hauled the guns
That smote King Philip's fleet!

(Out of the Weald, the secret Weald,
Men sent in ancient years
The horse-shoes red at Flodden Field,
The arrows at Poitiers!)

See you our little mill that clacks,
So busy by the brook?
She has ground her corn and paid her tax
Ever since Domesday Book.

See you our stilly woods of oak,
And the dread ditch beside?
Oh, that was where the Saxons broke
On the day that Harold died!

PUCK'S SONG

See you the windy levels spread
About the gates of Rye?
Oh, that was where the Northmen fled,
When Alfred's ships came by!

See you our pastures wide and lone,
Where the red oxen browse?
Oh, there was a City thronged and known,
Ere London boasted a house!

And see you, after rain, the trace
Of mound and ditch and wall?
Oh, that was a Legion's camping-place,
When Caesar sailed from Gaul!

And see you marks that show and fade,
Like shadows on the Downs?
Oh, they are the lines the Flint Men made,
To guard their wondrous towns!

Trackway and Camp and City lost,
Salt Marsh where now is corn—
Old Wars, old Peace, old Arts that cease,
And so was England born!

She is not any common Earth,
Water or Wood or Air,
But Merlin's Isle of Gramarye,
Where you and I will fare!

THE WAY THROUGH THE WOODS

THEY shut the road through the woods
Seventy years ago.
Weather and rain have undone it again,
And now you would never know
There was once a road through the woods
Before they planted the trees.
It is underneath the coppice and heath
And the thin anemones.
Only the keeper sees
That, where the ring-dove broods,
And the badgers roll at ease,
There was once a road through the woods.

Yet, if you enter the woods
Of a summer evening late,
When the night-air cools on the trout-ringed
 pools
Where the otter whistles his mate,
(They fear not men in the woods,
Because they see so few.)
You will hear the beat of a horse's feet,
And the swish of a skirt in the dew,
Steadily cantering through
The misty solitudes,
As though they perfectly knew
The old lost road through the woods . . .
But there is no road through the woods!

A THREE-PART SONG

A THREE-PART SONG

I'm just in love with all these three,
The Weald an' the Marsh an' the Down countree.
Nor I don't know which I love the most,
The Weald or the Marsh or the white Chalk coast!

I've buried my heart in a ferny hill,
Twix' a liddle low shaw an' a great high gill.
Oh, hop-bine yaller an' wood-smoke blue,
I reckon you'll keep her middling true!

I've loosed my mind for to out an' run
On a Marsh that was old when Kings begun.
Oh, Romney Level an' Brenzett reeds,
I reckon you know what my mind needs!

I've given my soul to the Southdown grass,
An' sheep-bells tinkled where you pass.
Oh, Firle an' Ditchling an' sails at sea,
I reckon you keep my soul for me!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE RUN OF THE DOWNS

*THE Weald is good, the Downs are best—
I'll give you the run of 'em, East to West.*
Beachy Head and Winddoor Hill,
They were once and they are still.
Firle, Mount Caburn and Mount Harry
Go back as far as sums 'll carry.
Ditchling Beacon and Chanctonbury Ring,
They have looked on many a thing,
And what those two have missed between 'em,
I reckon Truleigh Hill has seen 'em.
Highden, Bignor and Duncton Down
Knew Old England before the Crown.
Linch Down, Treyford and Sunwood
Knew Old England before the Flood;
And when you end on the Hampshire side—
Butser's old as Time and Tide.
*The Downs are sheep, the Weald is corn,
You be glad you are Sussex born!*

BROOKLAND ROAD

BROOKLAND ROAD

I WAS very well pleased with what I knowed,
I reckoned myself no fool—
Till I met with a maid on the Brookland Road
That turned me back to school.

*Low down—low down!
Where the liddle green lanterns shine—
Oh, maids, I've done with 'ee all but one,
And she can never be mine!*

'Twas right in the midst of a hot June night,
With thunder duntin' round,
And I seed her face by the fairy-light
That beats from off the ground.

She only smiled and she never spoke,
She smiled and went away;
But when she'd gone my heart was broke
And my wits was clean astray.

Oh, stop your ringin' and let me be—
Let be, O Brookland bells!
You'll ring Old Goodman¹ out of the sea,
Before I wed one else!

Old Goodman's Farm is rank sea-sand,
And was this thousand year:
But it shall turn to rich plough-land
Before I change my dear.

¹ Earl Godwin of the Goodwin Sands?

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Oh, Fairfield Church is water-bound
From autumn to the spring;
But it shall turn to high hill-ground
Before my bells do ring.

Oh, leave me walk on Brookland Road,
In the thunder and warm rain—
Oh, leave me look where my love goed,
And p'raps I'll see her again!

Low down—low down!
Where the liddle green lanterns shine—
Oh, maids, I've done with 'ee all but one,
And she can never be mine!

THE SACK OF THE GODS

THE SACK OF THE GODS

STRANGERS drawn from the ends of the earth, jewelled
and plumed were we;

I was Lord of the Inca race, and she was Queen of the
Sea.

Under the stars beyond our stars where the new-
forged meteors glow,

Hotly we stormed Valhalla, a million years ago!

*Ever 'neath high Valhalla Hall the well-tuned horn begin,
When the swords are out in the underworld, and the weary
Gods come in.*

*Ever through high Valhalla Gate the Patient Ange' goes.
He opens the eyes that are blind with hate—he joins the
hands of foes.*

Dust of the stars was under our feet, glitter of stars
above—

Wrecks of our wrath dropped reeling down as we
fought and we spurned and we strove.

Worlds upon worlds we tossed aside, and scattered
them to and fro,

The night that we stormed Valhalla, a million years
ago!

*They are forgiven as they forgive all those dark wounds
and deep.*

*Their beds are made on the Lap of Time and they lie down
and sleep.*

SONGS FROM BOOKS

They are forgiven as they forgive all those old wounds that bleed.

They shut their eyes from their worshippers; they sleep till the world has need.

She with the star I had marked for my own—I with
my set desire—

Lost in the loom of the Night of Nights—lighted by
worlds afire—

Met in a war against the Gods where the headlong
meteors glow,

Hewing our way to Valhalla, a million years ago!

*They will come back—come back again—as long as the red
Earth rolls.*

*He never wasted a leaf or a tree. Do you think He would
squander souls?*

THE KINGDOM

THE KINGDOM

Now we are come to our Kingdom,
And the State is thus and thus;
Our legions wait at the Palace gate—
Little it profits us.

Now we are come to our Kingdom!

Now we are come to our Kingdom,
And the Crown is ours to take—
With a naked sword at the Council board,
And under the Throne the Snake.

Now we are come to our Kingdom!

Now we are come to our Kingdom,
And the Realm is ours by right,
With shame and fear for our daily cheer,
And heaviness at night,

Now we are come to our Kingdom!

Now we are come to our Kingdom,
But my love's eyelids fall.
All that I wrought for, all that I fought for,
Delight her nothing at all.

My crown is of withered leaves,
For she sits in the dust and grieves,

Now we are come to our Kingdom!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

TARRANT MOSS

I CLOSED and drew for my love's sake
That now is false to me,
And I slew the Reiver of Tarrant Moss
And set Dumeny free.

They have gone down, they have gone down,
They are standing all arow—
Twenty knights in the peat-water,
That never struck a blow!

Their armour shall not dull nor rust,
Their flesh shall not decay,
For Tarrant Moss holds them in trust,
Until the Judgment Day.

Their soul went from them in their youth,
Ah, God, that mine had gone,
Whenas I leaned on my love's truth
And not on my sword alone!

Whenas I leaned on lad's belief
And not on my naked blade—
And I slew a thief, and an honest thief,
For the sake of a worthless maid.

They have laid the Reiver low in his place,
They have set me up on high.
But the twenty knights in the peat-water
Are luckier than I!

TARRANT MOSS

And ever they give me gold and praise
And ever I mourn my loss—
For I struck the blow for my false love's sake
And not for the Men of the Moss!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

SIR RICHARD'S SONG

(A.D. 1066)

I FOLLOWED my Duke ere I was a lover,
To take from England fief and fee;
But now this game is the other way over—
But now England hath taken me!

I had my horse, my shield and banner,
And a boy's heart, so whole and free;
But now I sing in another manner—
But now England hath taken me!

As for my Father in his tower,
Asking news of my ship at sea,
He will remember his own hour—
Tell him England hath taken me!

As for my Mother in her bower,
That rules my Father so cunningly,
She will remember a maiden's power—
Tell her England hath taken me!

As for my Brother in Rouen City,
A nimble and naughty page is he,
But he will come to suffer and pity—
Tell him England hath taken me!

As for my little Sister waiting
In the pleasant orchards of Normandie,

SIR RICHARD'S SONG

Tell her youth is the time for mating—
Tell her England hath taken me!

As for my comrades in camp and highway,
That lift their eyebrows scornfully,
Tell them their way is not my way—
Tell them England hath taken me!

Kings and Princes and Barons famed,
Knights and Captains in your degree;
Hear me a little before I am blamed—
Seeing England hath taken me!

Howso great man's strength be reckoned,
There are two things he cannot flee;
Love is the first, and Death is the second . . .
And Love in England hath taken me!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

A TREE SONG

(A.D. 1200)

OF all the trees that grow so fair,
Old England to adorn,
Greater are none beneath the Sun,
Than Oak, and Ash, and Thorn.
Sing Oak, and Ash, and Thorn, good sirs,
(All of a Midsummer morn!)
Surely we sing no little thing,
In Oak, and Ash, and Thorn!

Oak of the Clay lived many a day,
Or ever Aeneas began.
Ash of the Loam was a lady at home,
When Brut was an outlaw man.
Thorn of the Down saw New Troy Town
(From which was London born);
Witness hereby the ancientry
Of Oak, and Ash, and Thorn!

Yew that is old in churchyard-mould,
He breedeth a mighty bow.
Alder for shoes do wise men choose,
And beech for cups also.
But when ye have killed, and your bowl is
spilled,
And your shoes are clean outworn,
Back ye must speed for all that ye need,
To Oak, and Ash, and Thorn!

A TREE SONG

Ellum she hateth mankind, and waiteth
Till every gust be laid,
To drop a limb on the head of him
That anyway trusts her shade.
But whether a lad be sober or sad,
Or mellow with ale from the horn,
He will take no wrong when he lieth along
'Neath Oak, and Ash, and Thorn!

Oh, do not tell the Priest our plight,
Or he would call it a sin;
But—we have been out in the woods all night,
A-conjuring Summer in!
And we bring you news by word of mouth—
Good news for cattle and corn—
Now is the Sun come up from the South,
With Oak, and Ash, and Thorn!

Sing Oak, and Ash, and Thorn, good sirs,
(All of a Midsummer morn!)
England shall bide till Judgment Tide,
By Oak, and Ash, and Thorn!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

CUCKOO SONG

Spring begins in Southern England on the 14th April, on which date the Old Woman lets the Cuckoo out of her basket at Heathfield Fair—locally known as Heffle Cuckoo Fair.

TELL it to the locked-up trees,
Cuckoo, bring your song here!
Warrant, Act and Summons, please,
For Spring to pass along here!
Tell old Winter, if he doubt,
Tell him squat and square—a!
Old Woman!
Old Woman!
Old Woman's let the Cuckoo out
At Heffle Cuckoo Fair—a!

March has searched and April tried—
'Tisn't long to May now.
Not so far to Whitsuntide,
And Cuckoo's come to stay now!
Hear the valiant fellow shout
Down the orchard bare—a!
Old Woman!
Old Woman!
Old Woman's let the Cuckoo out
At Heffle Cuckoo Fair—a!

When your heart is young and gay
And the season rules it—

CUCKOO SONG

Work your works and play your play
'Fore the Autumn cools it!
Kiss you turn and turn-about,
But, my lad, beware—a!
Old Woman!
Old Woman!
Old Woman's let the Cuckoo out
At Heffle Cuckoo Fair—a!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

A CHARM

(Introduction to *Rewards and Fairies*)

TAKE of English earth as much
As either hand may rightly clutch.
In the taking of it breathe
Prayer for all who lie beneath.
Not the great nor well-bespoke,
But the mere uncounted folk
Of whose life and death is none
Report or lamentation.
Lay that earth upon thy heart,
And thy sickness shall depart!

It shall sweeten and make whole
Fevered breath and festered soul.
It shall mightily restrain
Over-busied hand and brain.
It shall ease thy mortal strife
'Gainst the immortal woe of life,
Till thyself, restored, shalt prove
By what grace the Heavens do move.

Take of English flowers these—
Spring's full-facing primroses,
Summer's wild wide-hearted rose,
Autumn's wall-flower of the close,
And, thy darkness to illume,
Winter's bee-thronged ivy-bloom.

A CHARM

Seek and serve them where they bide
From Candlemas to Christmas-tide,
For these simples, used aright,
Can restore a failing sight.

These shall cleanse and purify
Webbed and inward-turning eye;
These shall show thee treasure hid,
Thy familiar fields amid;
And reveal (which is thy need)
Every man a King indeed!

THE PRAIRIE

(CANADA)

'I SEE the grass shake in the sun for leagues on either
hand,
I see a river loop and run about a treeless land—
An empty plain, a steely pond, a distance diamond-
clear,
And low blue naked hills beyond. And what is that
to fear?'

'Go softly by that river-side or, when you would
depart,
You'll find its every winding tied and knotted round
your heart.
Be wary as the seasons pass, or you may ne'er outrun
The wind that sets that yellowed grass a-shiver 'neath
the sun.'

'I hear the summer storm outblown—the drip of the
grateful wheat.
I hear the hard trail telephone a far-off horse's feet.
I hear the horns of Autumn blow to the wild-fowl
overhead;
And I hear the hush before the snow. And what is that
to dread?'

'Take heed what spell the lightning weaves—what
charm the echoes shape—
Or, bound among a million sheaves, your soul shall
not escape.

THE PRAIRIE

Bar home the door of summer nights lest those high
planets drown
The memory of near delights in all the longed-for
town.'

'What need have I to long or fear? Now, friend, I
behold
My faithful seasons robe the year in silver and in gold.
Now I possess and am possessed of the land where I
would be,
And the curve of half Earth's generous breast shall
soothe and ravish me!'

COLD IRON

*GOLD is for the mistress—silver for the maid—
Copper for the craftsman cunning at his trade.*
'Good!' said the Baron, sitting in his hall,
'But Iron—Cold Iron—is master of them all.'

So he made rebellion 'gainst the King his liege,
Camped before his citadel and summoned it to siege.
'Nay!' said the cannoneer on the castle wall,
'But Iron—Cold Iron—shall be master of you all!'

Woe for the Baron and his knights so strong,
When the cruel cannon-balls laid 'em all along;
He was taken prisoner, he was cast in thrall,
And Iron—Cold Iron—was master of it all!

Yet his King spake kindly (Ah, how kind a Lord!):
'What if I release thee now and give thee back thy
sword?'

'Nay!' said the Baron, 'mock not at my fall,
For Iron—Cold Iron—is master of men all.'

*Tears are for the craven, prayers are for the clown—
Halters for the silly neck that cannot keep a crown.*
'As my loss is grievous, so my hope is small,
For Iron—Cold Iron—must be master of men all!'

Yet his King made answer (few such Kings there be!):
'Here is Bread and here is Wine—sit and sup with me.

COLD IRON

Eat and drink in Mary's Name, the whiles I do recall
How Iron—Cold Iron—can be master of men all!

He took the Wine and blessed It. He blessed and brake
the Bread,

With His own Hands He served Them, and presently
He said:

'See! These Hands they pierced with nails, outside My
city wall,

Show Iron—Cold Iron—to be master of men all!

'Wounds are for the desperate, blows are for the
strong—

Balm and oil for weary hearts all cut and bruised with
wrong.

I forgive thy treason—I redeem thy fall—

For Iron—Cold Iron—must be master of men all!

Crowns are for the valiant—sceptres for the bold!
Thrones and powers for mighty men who dare to take and
hold!

'Nay!' said the Baron, kneeling in his hall,

'But Iron—Cold Iron—is master of men all!

Iron out of Calvary is master of men all!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

A SONG OF KABIR

OH, light was the world that he weighed in his hands!

Oh, heavy the tale of his fiefs and his lands!

He has gone from the *guddee*¹ and put on the shroud,
And departed in guise of *bairagi*² avowed!

Now the white road to Delhi is mat for his feet.
The *sal* and the *kikar*³ must guard him from heat.
His home is the camp, and the waste, and the crowd—
He is seeking the Way as *bairagi* avowed!

He has looked upon Man, and his eyeballs are clear—
(There was One; there is One, and but One, saith
Kabir);

The Red Mist of Doing has thinned to a cloud—
He has taken the Path for *bairagi* avowed!

To learn and discern of his brother the clod,
Of his brother the brute, and his brother the God,
He has gone from the council and put on the shroud
(‘Can ye hear?’ saith Kabir), a *bairagi* avowed!

¹ Seat of justice, throne.

² Wandering holy man.

³ Wayside trees.

A CAROL

A CAROL

OUR Lord Who did the Ox command
To kneel to Judah's King,
He binds His frost upon the land
To ripen it for Spring—
To ripen it for Spring, good sirs,
According to His Word.
Which well must be as ye can see—
And who shall judge the Lord?

When we poor fenmen skate the ice
Or shiver on the wold,
We hear the cry of a single tree
That breaks her heart in the cold—
That breaks her heart in the cold, good sirs,
And rendeth by the board.
Which well must be as ye can see—
And who shall judge the Lord?

Her wood is crazed and little worth
Excepting as to burn,
That we may warm and make our mirth
Until the Spring return—
Until the Spring return, good sirs,
When Christians walk abroad;
Which well must be as ye can see—
And who shall judge the Lord?

God bless the master of this house,
And all who sleep therein!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

And guard the fens from pirate folk,
And keep us all from sin,
To walk in honesty, good sirs,
Of thought and deed and word!
Which shall befriend our latter end . . .
And who shall judge the Lord?

‘MY NEW-CUT ASHLAR’

‘MY NEW-CUT ASHLAR’

(Envoi to *Life's Handicap*)

My new-cut ashlar takes the light
Where crimson-blank the windows flare.
By my own work before the night,
Great Overseer, I make my prayer.

If there be good in that I wrought,
Thy Hand compelled it, Master, Thine—
Where I have failed to meet Thy Thought
I know, through Thee, the blame was mine.

One instant's toil to Thee denied
Stands all Eternity's offence.
Of that I did with Thee to guide,
To Thee, through Thee, be excellence.

The depth and dream of my desire,
The bitter paths wherein I stray—
Thou knowest Who hast made the Fire,
Thou knowest Who hast made the Clay.

Who, lest all thought of Eden fade,
Bring'st Eden to the craftsman's brain—
Godlike to muse o'er his own Trade
And manlike stand with God again!

One stone the more swings into place
In that dread Temple of Thy worth.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

It is enough that, through Thy Grace,
I saw naught common on Thy Earth.

Take not that vision from my ken—
Oh, whatsoe'er may spoil or speed.
Help me to need no aid from men
That I may help such men as need!

EDDI'S SERVICE

EDDI'S SERVICE

(A.D. 687)

EDDI, priest of St. Wilfrid
In his chapel at Manhood End,
Ordered a midnight service
For such as cared to attend.

But the Saxons were keeping Christmas,
And the night was stormy as well.
Nobody came to service,
Though Eddi rang the bell.

'Wicked weather for walking,'
Said Eddi of Manhood End.
'But I must go on with the service
For such as care to attend.'

The altar-lamps were lighted,—
An old marsh-donkey came,
Bold as a guest invited,
And stared at the guttering flame.

The storm beat on at the windows,
The water splashed on the floor,
And a wet, yoke-weary bullock
Pushed in through the open door.

'How do I know what is greatest,
How do I know what is least?

SONGS FROM BOOKS

That is My Father's business,'
Said Eddi, Wilfrid's priest.

'But—three are gathered together—
Listen to me and attend.
I bring good news, my brethren !'
Said Eddi of Manhood End.

And he told the Ox of a Manger
And a Stall in Bethlehem,
And he spoke to the Ass of a Rider,
That rode to Jerusalem.

They steamed and dripped in the chancel,
They listened and never stirred,
While, just as though they were Bishops,
Eddi preached them The Word,

Till the gale blew off on the marshes
And the windows showed the day,
And the Ox and the Ass together
Wheeled and clattered away.

And when the Saxons mocked him,
Said Eddi of Manhood End,
'I dare not shut His chapel
On such as care to attend.'

SHIV AND THE GRASSHOPPER

SHIV, who poured the harvest and made the winds to
blow,

Sitting at the doorways of a day of long ago,
Gave to each his portion, food and toil and fat,
From the King upon the *guddee* to the Beggar at the gate.

All things made he—Shiva the Preserver.

Mahadeo! Mahadeo! He made all,—

Thorn for the camel, fodder for the kine,

And Mother's heart for sleepy head, O little Son of mine!

Wheat he gave to rich folk, millet to the poor,
Broken scraps for holy men that beg from door to
door;

Cattle to the tiger, carrion to the kite,
And rags and bones to wicked wolves without the
wall at night.

Naught he found too lofty, none he saw too low—
Parvati beside him watched them come and go;
Thought to cheat her husband, turning Shiv to jest—
Stole the little grasshopper and hid it in her breast.

So she tricked him, Shiva the Preserver.

Mahadeo! Mahadeo, turn and see!

Tall are the camels, heavy are the kine,

But this was Least of Little Things, O little Son of mine!

When the dole was ended, laughingly she said,
'Master, of a million mouths is not one unfed?'
Laughing, Shiv made answer, 'All have had their part,
Even he, the little one, hidden 'neath thy heart.'

SONGS FROM BOOKS

From her breast she plucked it, Parbati the thief,
Saw the Least of Little Things gnawed a new-grown
leaf!

Saw and feared and wondered, making prayer to Shiv,
Who hath surely given meat to all that live.

All things made he—Shiva the Preserver.

Mahadeo! Mahadeo! He made all,—

Thorn for the camel, fodder for the kine,

And Mother's heart for sleepy head, O little Son of mine!

THE FAIRIES' SIEGE

THE FAIRIES' SIEGE

I HAVE been given my charge to keep—
Well have I kept the same!
Playing with strife for the most of my life,
But this is a different game.
I'll not fight against swords unseen,
Or spears that I cannot view—
Hand him the keys of the place on your knees—
'Tis the Dreamer whose dreams come true !

Ask for his terms and accept them at once.
Quick, ere we anger him, go!
Never before have I flinched from the guns,
But this is a different show.
I'll not fight with the Herald of God
(I know what his Master can do!).
Open the gate, he must enter in state,
'Tis the Dreamer whose dreams come true !

I'd not give way for an Emperor,
I'd hold my road for a King—
To the Triple Crown I would not bow down—
But this is a different thing.
I'll not fight with the Powers of Air,
Sentry, pass him through!
Drawbridge let fall, 'tis the Lord of us all,
The Dreamer whose dreams come true !

A SONG TO MITHRAS

(HYMN OF THE XXX LEGION: *CIRCA* A.D. 350)

MITHRAS, God of the Morning, our trumpets waken
the Wall!

'Rome is above the Nations, but Thou art over all!'
Now as the names are answered, and the guards are
marched away,
Mithras, also a soldier, give us strength for the day!

Mithras, God of the Noontide, the heather swims in
the heat.

Our helmets scorch our foreheads, our sandals burn
our feet.

Now in the ungirt hour—now ere we blink and drowse,
Mithras, also a soldier, keep us true to our vows!

Mithras, God of the Sunset, low on the Western main—
Thou descending immortal, immortal to rise again!
Now when the watch is ended, now when the wine is
drawn,

Mithras, also a soldier, keep us pure till the dawn!

Mithras, God of the Midnight, here where the great
Bull dies,

Look on Thy children in darkness. Oh, take our sacri-
fice!

Many roads Thou hast fashioned—all of them lead to
the Light!

Mithras, also a soldier, teach us to die aright!

THE NEW KNIGHTHOOD

THE NEW KNIGHTHOOD

Who gives him the Bath?
'I,' said the wet,
Rank Jungle-sweat,
'I'll give him the Bath!'

Who'll sing the psalms?
'We,' said the Palms.
'Ere the hot wind becalms,
We'll sing the psalms.'

Who lays on the sword?
'I,' said the Sun,
'Before he has done,
I'll lay on the sword.'

Who fastens his belt?
'I,' said Short-Rations.
'I know all the fashions
Of tightening a belt!'

Who gives him his spur?
'I,' said his Chief,
Exacting and brief,
'I'll give him the spur.'

Who'll shake his hand?
'I,' said the Fever,
'And I'm no deceiver,
I'll shake his hand.'

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Who brings him the wine?
'I,' said Quinine,
'It's a habit of mine.
I'll come with his wine.'

Who'll put him to proof?
'I,' said All Earth,
'Whatever he's worth,
I'll put to the proof.'

Who'll choose him for Knight?
'I,' said his Mother,
'Before any other,
My very own Knight!'

And after this fashion, adventure to seek,
Was Sir Galahad made—as it might be last week!

OUTSONG IN THE JUNGLE

OUTSONG IN THE JUNGLE

BALOO

FOR the sake of him who showed
One wise Frog the Jungle-Road,
Keep the Law the Man-Pack make
For thy blind old Baloo's sake!
Clean or tainted, hot or stale,
Hold it as it were the Trail,
Through the day and through the night
Questing neither left nor right.
For the sake of him who loves
Thee beyond all else that moves,
When thy Pack would make thee pain
Say: 'Tabaqui sings again.'
When thy Pack would work thee ill,
Say: 'Shere Khan is yet to kill.'
When the knife is drawn to slay,
Keep the Law and go thy way.
(Root and honey, palm and spathe,
Guard a cub from harm and scathe!)
*Wood and Water, Wind and Tree,
Jungle-Favour go with thee!*

KAA

Anger is the egg of Fear—
Only lidless eyes see clear.
Cobra-poison none may leech—
Even so with Cobra-speech.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Open talk shall call to thee
Strength, whose mate is Courtesy.
Send no lunge beyond thy length.
Lend no rotten bough thy strength.
Gauge thy gape with buck or goat,
Lest thine eye should choke thy throat.
After gorging, wouldst thou sleep?
Look thy den be hid and deep,
Lest a wrong, by thee forgot,
Draw thy killer to the spot.
East and West and North and South,
Wash thy hide and close thy mouth.
(Pit and rift and blue pool-brim,
Middle-Jungle follow him!)
*Wood and Water, Wind and Tree,
Jungle-Favour go with thee!*

BAGHEERA

In the cage my life began;
Well I know the worth of Man.
By the Broken Lock that freed—
Man-cub, 'ware the Man-cub's breed!
Scenting-dew or starlight pale,
Choose no tangled tree-cat trail.
Pack or council, hunt or den,
Cry no truce with Jackal-Men.
Feed them silence when they say:
'Come with us an easy way.'
Feed them silence when they seek
Help of thine to hurt the weak,
Make no *bandar's* boast of skill;

OUTSONG IN THE JUNGLE

Hold thy peace above the kill.
Let nor call nor song nor sign
Turn thee from thy hunting-line.
(Morning mist or twilight clear,
Serve him, Wardens of the Deer!)
*Wood and Water, Wind and Tree,
Jungle-Favour go with thee!*

THE THREE

*On the trail that thou must tread
To the thresholds of our dread,
Where the Flower blossoms red;
Through the nights when thou shalt lie
Prisoned from our Mother-sky,
Hearing us, thy loves, go by;
In the dawns when thou shalt wake
To the toil thou canst not break,
Heartsick for the Jungle's sake;
Wood and Water, Wind and Tree,
Wisdom, Strength, and Courtesy,
Jungle-Favour go with thee!*

HARP SONG OF THE DANE WOMEN

WHAT is a woman that you forsake her,
And the hearth-fire and the home-acre,
To go with the old grey Widow-maker?

She has no house to lay a guest in—
But one chill bed for all to rest in,
That the pale suns and the stray bergs nest in.

She has no strong white arms to fold you,
But the ten-times-fingering weed to hold you—
Out on the rocks where the tide has rolled you.

Yet, when the signs of summer thicken,
And the ice breaks, and the birch-buds quicken,
Yearly you turn from our side, and sicken—

Sicken again for the shouts and the slaughters,—
And steal away to the lapping waters,
And look at your ship in her winter-quarters.

You forget our mirth, and talk at the tables,
The kine in the shed and the horse in the stables—
To pitch her sides and go over her cables.

Then you drive out where the storm-clouds swallow,
And the sound of your oar-blades, falling hollow,
Is all we have left through the months to follow.

Ah, what is Woman that you forsake her,
And the hearth-fire and the home-acre,
To go with the old grey Widow-maker?

THE THOUSANDTH MAN

THE THOUSANDTH MAN

ONE man in a thousand, Solomon says,
Will stick more close than a brother.
And it's worth while seeking him half your days
If you find him before the other.
Nine hundred and ninety-nine depend
On what the world sees in you,
But the Thousandth Man will stand your friend
With the whole round world agin you.

'Tis neither promise nor prayer nor show
Will settle the finding for 'ee.
Nine hundred and ninety-nine of 'em go
By your looks, or your acts, or your glory.
But if he finds you and you find him,
The rest of the world don't matter;
For the Thousandth Man will sink or swim
With you in any water.

You can use his purse with no more talk
Than he uses yours for his spendings,
And laugh and meet in your daily walk
As though there had been no lendings.
Nine hundred and ninety-nine of 'em call
For silver and gold in their dealings;
But the Thousandth Man he's worth 'em all,
Because you can show him your feelings.

His wrong's your wrong, and his right's your right,
In season or out of season.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Stand up and back it in all men's sight—
With *that* for your only reason!
Nine hundred and ninety-nine can't bide
The shame or mocking or laughter,
But the Thousandth Man will stand by your side
To the gallows-foot—and after!

THE WINNERS

THE WINNERS

(Envoi to *The Story of the Gadsbys*)

WHAT is the moral? Who rides may read.
When the night is thick and the tracks are blind
A friend at a pinch is a friend indeed,
But a fool to wait for the laggard behind.
Down to Gehenna or up to the Throne,
He travels the fastest who travels alone.

White hands cling to the tightened rein,
Slipping the spur from the booted heel,
Tenderest voices cry 'Turn again!'
Red lips tarnish the scabbarded steel.
High hopes faint on a warm hearth-stone—
He travels the fastest who travels alone.

One may fall, but he falls by himself—
Falls by himself with himself to blame.
One may attain and to him is pelf,
Loot of the city in Gold or Fame.
Plunder of earth shall be all his own
Who travels the fastest and travels alone.

Wherefore the more ye be holpen and stayed,
Stayed by a friend in the hour of toil,
Sing the heretical song I have made—
His be the labour and yours be the spoil.
Win by his aid and the aid disown—
He travels the fastest who travels alone!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

A ST. HELENA LULLABY

'How far is St. Helena from a little child at play?'

What makes you want to wander there with all the
world between?

Oh, Mother, call your son again or else he'll run
away.

(No one thinks of winter when the grass is green!)

'How far is St. Helena from a fight in Paris street?'

I haven't time to answer now—the men are falling
fast.

The guns begin to thunder, and the drums begin to
beat.

(If you take the first step, you will take the last!)

'How far is St. Helena from the field of Austerlitz?'

You couldn't hear me if I told—so loud the cannon
roar.

But not so far for people who are living by their wits.

('Gay go up' means 'Gay go down' the wide world o'er!)

'How far is St. Helena from an Emperor of France?'

I cannot see—I cannot tell—the Crowns they dazzle so.

The Kings sit down to dinner, and the Queens stand
up to dance.

(After open weather you may look for snow!)

'How far is St. Helena from the Capes of Trafalgar?'

A longish way—a longish way—with ten year more
to run.

A ST. HELENA LULLABY

It's South across the water underneath a falling star.
(What you cannot finish you must leave undone!)

'How far is St. Helena from the Beresina ice?'
An ill way—a chill way—the ice begins to crack.
But not so far for gentlemen who never took advice.
(When you can't go forward you must e'en come back!)

'How far is St. Helena from the field of Waterloo?'
A near way—a clear way—the ship will take you soon.
A pleasant place for gentlemen with little left to do.
(Morning never tries you till the afternoon!)

'How far from St. Helena to the Gate of Heaven's
Grace?'
That no one knows—that no one knows—and no one
ever will.
But fold your hands across your heart and cover up
your face,
And after all your trapesings, child, lie still!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

CHIL'S SONG

THESE were my companions going forth by night—

(For Chil! Look you, for Chil!)

Now come I to whistle them the ending of the fight.

(Chil! Vanguard of Chil!)

Word they gave me overhead of quarry newly slain.

Word I gave them underfoot of buck upon the plain.

Here's an end of every trail—they shall not speak
again!

They that called the hunting-cry—they that followed
fast—

(For Chil! Look you, for Chil!)

They that bade the sambhur wheel, or pinned him as
he passed—

(Chil! Vanguard of Chil!)

They that lagged behind the scent—they that ran
before—

They that shunned the level horn—they that over-
bore—

Here's an end of every trail—they shall not follow
more.

These were my companions. Pity 'twas they died!

(For Chil! Look you, for Chil!)

Now come I to comfort them who knew them in
their pride.

(Chil! Vanguard of Chil!)

CHIL'S SONG

Tattered flank and sunken eye, open mouth and red,
Locked and lank and lone they lie, the dead upon their
dead.

Here's an end of every trail—and here my hosts are
fed!

THE CAPTIVE

NOT with an outcry to Allah nor any complaining
He answered his name at the muster and stood to the
chaining.

When the twin anklets were nipped on the leg-bars
that held them,

He brotherly greeted the armourers stooping to weld
them.

Ere the sad dust of the marshalled feet of the chain-
gang swallowed him,

Observing him nobly at ease, I alighted and followed
him.

Thus we had speech by the way, but not touching his
sorrow—

Rather his red Yesterday and his regal To-morrow,
Wherein he statelily moved to the clink of his chains
unregarded,

Nowise abashed but contented to drink of the potion
awarded.

Saluting aloofly his Fate, he made haste with his story,
And the words of his mouth were as slaves spreading
carpets of glory

Embroidered with names of the Djinns—a miraculous
weaving—

But the cool and perspicuous eye overbore unbelieving.

So I submitted myself to the limits of rapture—

Bound by this man we had bound, amid captives his
capture—

Till he returned me to earth and the visions departed.

But on him be the Peace and the Blessing; for he was
great-hearted!

THE PUZZLER

THE PUZZLER

THE Celt in all his variants from Builth to Ballyhoo,
His mental processes are plain—one knows what he
will do

And can logically predicate his finish by his start;
But the English—ah, the English—they are quite a race
apart.

Their psychology is bovine, their outlook crude and
raw.

They abandon vital matters to be tickled with a straw;
But the straw that they were tickled with—the chaff
that they were fed with—

They convert into a weaver's beam to break their foe-
man's head with.

For undemocratic reasons and for motives not of State,
They arrive at their conclusions—largely inarticulate.
Being void of self-expression they confide their views
to none;

But sometimes in a smoking-room, one learns why
things were done.

Yes, sometimes in a smoking-room, through clouds
of 'Ers' and 'Ums,'

Obliquely and by inference, illumination comes

On some step that they have taken

they approve

For

Upper Fourth

SONGS FROM BOOKS

In telegraphic sentences, half nodded to their friends,
They hint a matter's inwardness—and there the matter
ends.

And while the Celt is talking from Valencia to Kirk-
wall,

The English—ah, the English!—don't say anything
at all.

HADRAMAUTI

HADRAMAUTI

WHO knows the heart of the Christian? How does he
reason?

What are his measures and balances? Which is his
season

For laughter, forbearance or bloodshed, and what
devils move him

When he arises to smite us? *I* do not love him

He invites the derision of strangers—he enters all
places.

Booted, bareheaded he enters. With shouts and embraces

He asks of us news of the household whom *we* reckon
nameless.

Certainly Allah created him forty-fold shameless!

So it is not in the Desert. One came to me weeping—
The Avenger of Blood on his track—I took him in
keeping.

Demanding not whom he had slain, I refreshed him,
I fed him

As he were even a brother. But Eblis had bred him.

He was the son of an ape, ill at ease in his clothing.
He talked with his head, hands and feet. I endured
him with loathing.

Whatever his spirit conceived his countenance showed
it

As a frog shows in a mud-puddle. Yet I abode it!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

I fingered my beard and was dumb, in silence confronting him.

His soul was too shallow for silence, e'en with Death hunting him.

I said: 'Tis his weariness speaks,' but, when he had rested,

He chirped in my face like some sparrow, and, presently, jested!

Wherefore slew I that stranger? He brought me dishonour.

I saddled my mare, Bijli, I set him upon her.

I gave him rice and goat's flesh. He bared me to laughter.

When he was gone from my tent, swift I followed after,

Taking my sword in my hand. The hot wine had filled him.

Under the stars he mocked me—therefore I killed him!

GALLIO'S SONG

GALLIO'S SONG

And Gallio cared for none of these things.—*Acts*
xviii. 17.

ALL day long to the judgment-seat
The crazed Provincials drew—
All day long at their ruler's feet
Howled for the blood of the Jew.
Insurrection with one accord
Banded itself and woke,
And Paul was about to open his mouth
When Achaia's Deputy spoke :—

'Whether the God descend from above
Or the Man ascend upon high,
Whether this maker of tents be Jove
Or a younger deity—
I will be no judge between your gods
And your godless bickerings.
Lictor, drive them hence with rods—
I care for none of these things!

'Were it a question of lawful due
Or Caesar's rule denied,
Reason would I should bear with you
And order it well to be tried;
But this is a question of words and names.
I know the strife it brings.
I will not pass upon any your claims.
I care for none of these things!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

'One thing only I see most clear,
As I pray you also see.
Claudius Caesar hath set me here
Rome's Deputy to be.
It is Her peace that ye go to break—
Not mine, nor any King's.
But, touching your clamour of "Conscience"
sake,"
I care for none of these things.

'Whether ye rise for the sake of a creed,
Or riot in hope of spoil,
Equally will I punish the deed,
Equally check the broil:
Nowise permitting injustice at all,
From whatever doctrine it springs—
But—whether ye follow Priapus or Paul,
I care for none of these things!'

THE BEES AND THE FLIES

A FARMER of the Augustan Age
Perused in Virgil's golden page
The story of the secret won
From Proteus by Cyrene's son—
How the dank sea-god showed the swai
Means to restore his hives again.
More briefly, how a slaughtered bull
Breeds honey by the bellyful.

The egregious rustic put to death
A bull by stopping of its breath,
Disposed the carcass in a shed
With fragrant herbs and branches spread;
And, having well performed the charm,
Sat down to wait the promised swarm.

Nor waited long. The God of Day
Impartial, quickening with his ray
Evil and good alike, beheld
The carcass—and the carcass swelled.
Big with new birth the belly heaves
Beneath its screen of scented leaves.
Past any doubt, the bull conceives!

The farmer bids men bring more hives
To house the profit that arrives;
Prepares on pan, and key and kettle,
Sweet music that shall make 'em settle;
But when to crown the work he goes,
Gods! What a stink salutes his nose!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Where are the honest toilers? Where
The gravid mistress of their care?
A busy scene, indeed, he sees,
But not a sign or sound of bees.
Worms of the riper grave unhid
By any kindly coffin-lid,
Obscene and shameless to the light,
Seethe in insatiate appetite
Through putrid offal, while above
The hissing blow-fly seeks his love,
Whose offspring, supping where they supt,
Consume corruption twice corrupt.

ROAD-SONG OF THE BANDAR-LOG

ROAD-SONG OF THE BANDAR-LOG

HERE we go in a flung festoon,
Half-way up to the jealous moon!
Don't you envy our pranceful bands?
Don't you wish you had extra hands?
Wouldn't you like if your tails were—so—
Curved in the shape of a Cupid's bow?
Now you're angry, but—never mind,
Brother, thy tail hangs down behind!

Here we sit in a branchy row,
Thinking of beautiful things we know;
Dreaming of deeds that we mean to do,
All complete, in a minute or two—
Something noble and grand and good,
Won by merely wishing we could.
Now we're going to—never mind,
Brother, thy tail hangs down behind!

All the talk we ever have heard
Uttered by bat or beast or bird—
Hide or fin or scale or feather—
Jabber it quickly and all together!
Excellent! Wonderful! Once again!
Now we are talking just like men.
Let's pretend we are. . . . Never mind,
Brother, thy tail hangs down behind!
This is the way of the Monkey-kind!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

*Then join our leaping lines that scumfish through the pines,
That rocket by where, light and high, the wild-grape swings.
By the rubbish in our wake, and the noble noise we make,
Be sure—be sure, we're going to do some splendid things!*

‘OUR FATHERS ALSO’

‘OUR FATHERS ALSO’

THRONES, Powers, Dominions, Peoples, Kings,
Are changing 'neath our hand.
Our fathers also see these things
But they do not understand.

By—they are by with mirth and tears,
Wit or the works of Desire—
Cushioned about on the kindly years
Between the wall and the fire.

The grapes are pressed, the corn is shocker—
Standeth no more to glean;
For the Gates of Love and Learning locked
When they went out between.

All lore our Lady Venus bares,
Signalled it was or told
By the dear lips long given to theirs
And longer to the mould.

All Profit, all Device, all Truth,
Written it was or said
By the mighty men of their mighty youth,
Which is mighty being dead.

The film that floats before their eyes
The Temple's Veil they call;
And the dust that on the Shewbread lies
Is holy over all.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Warn them of seas that slip our yoke,
Of slow-conspiring stars—
The ancient Front of Things unbroke
But heavy with new wars?

By—they are by with mirth and tears,
Wit or the waste of Desire—
Cushioned about on the kindly years
Between the wall and the fire!

A BRITISH-ROMAN SONG

A BRITISH-ROMAN SONG

(A.D. 406)

MY father's father saw it not,
And I, belike, shall never come
To look on that so-holy spot—
The very Rome—

Crowned by all Time, all Art, all Might,
The equal work of Gods and Man,
City beneath whose oldest height—
The Race began!

Soon to send forth again a brood,
Unshakeable, we pray, that clings
To Rome's thrice-hammered hardihood—
In arduous things.

Strong heart with triple armour bound,
Beat strongly, for Thy life-blood runs,
Age after age, the Empire round—
In us Thy Sons

Who, distant from the Seven Hills,
Loving and serving much, require
Thee—*Thee* to guard 'gainst home-born ills
The Imperial Fire!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

A PICT SONG

ROME never looks where she treads.
Always her heavy hooves fall
On our stomachs, our hearts or our heads;
And Rome never heeds when we bawl.
Her sentries pass on—that is all,
And we gather behind them in hordes,
And plot to reconquer the Wall,
With only our tongues for our swords.

We are the Little Folk—we!
Too little to love or to hate.
Leave us alone and you'll see
How we can drag down the State!
We are the worm in the wood!
We are the rot at the root!
We are the taint in the blood!
We are the thorn in the foot!

Mistletoe killing an oak—
Rats gnawing cables in two—
Moths making holes in a cloak—
How they must love what they do!
Yes—and we Little Folk too,
We are busy as they—
Working our works out of view—
Watch, and you'll see it some day!

No, indeed! We are not strong,
But we know Peoples that are.

A PICT SONG

Yes, and we'll guide them along,
To smash and destroy you in war!
We shall be slaves just the same?
Yes, we have always been slaves,
But you—you will die of the shame,
And then we shall dance on your graves!

We are the Little Folk—we! etc.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE STRANGER

(CANADIAN)

THE Stranger within my gate,
He may be true or kind,
But he does not talk my talk—
I cannot feel his mind.
I see the face and the eyes and the mouth,
But not the soul behind.

The men of my own stock,
They may do ill or well,
But they tell the lies I am wonted to,
They are used to the lies I tell;
We do not need interpreters
When we go to buy and sell.

The Stranger within my gates,
He may be evil or good,
But I cannot tell what powers control—
What reasons sway his mood;
Nor when the Gods of his far-off land
May repossess his blood.

The men of my own stock,
Bitter bad they may be,
But, at least, they hear the things I hear,
And see the things I see;
And whatever I think of them and their likes
They think of the likes of me.

THE STRANGER

This was my father's belief
And this is also mine:
Let the corn be all one sheaf—
And the grapes be all one vine,
Ere our children's teeth are set on edge
By bitter bread and wine.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

‘RIMINI’

(MARCHING SONG OF A ROMAN LEGION OF
THE LATER EMPIRE)

WHEN I left Rome for Lalage's sake
By the Legions' Road to Rimini,
She vowed her heart was mine to take
With me and my shield to Rimini—
(Till the Eagles flew from Rimini—)
And I've tramped Britain, and I've tramped Gaul,
And the Pontic shore where the snow-flakes fall
As white as the neck of Lalage—
(As cold as the heart of Lalage!)
And I've lost Britain, and I've lost Gaul,
And I've lost Rome and, worst of all,
I've lost Lalage!

When you go by the Via Aurelia,
As thousands have travelled before,
Remember the Luck of the Soldier
Who never saw Rome any more!
Oh, dear was the sweetheart that kissed him,
And dear was the mother that bore;
But his shield was picked up in the heather,
And he never saw Rome any more!

And *he* left Rome, etc.

When you go by the Via Aurelia
That runs from the City to Gaul,

‘RIMINI’

Remember the Luck of the Soldier
Who rose to be master of all!
He carried the sword and the buckler,
He mounted his guard on the Wall,
Till the Legions elected him Caesar,
And he rose to be master of all!

And *he* left Rome, etc.

It's twenty-five marches to Narbo,
It's forty-five more up the Rhone,
And the end may be death in the heathe
Or life on an Emperor's throne.
But whether the Eagles obey us,
Or we go to the Ravens—alone,
I'd sooner be Lalage's lover
Than sit on an Emperor's throne!

We've *all* left Rome for Lalage's sake, etc.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

‘POOR HONEST MEN’

(A.D. 1800)

YOUR jar of Virginny
Will cost you a guinea,
Which you reckon too much by five shilling or ten;
But light your churchwarden
And judge it accordin’,
When I’ve told you the troubles of poor honest men.

From the Capes of the Delaware,
As you are well aware,
We sail with tobacco for England—but then,
Our own British cruisers,
They watch us come through, sirs,
And they press half a score of us poor honest men!

Or if by quick sailing
(Thick weather prevailing)
We leave them behind (as we do now and then)
We are sure of a gun from
Each frigate we run from,
Which is often destruction to poor honest men!

Broadsides the Atlantic
We tumble short-handed,
With shot-holes to plug and new canvas to bend;
And off the Azores,
Dutch, Dons and Monsieus
Are waiting to terrify poor honest men.

‘POOR HONEST MEN’

Napoleon's embargo
Is laid on all cargo
Which comfort or aid to King George may intend;
And since roll, twist and leaf,
Of all comforts is chief,
They try for to steal it from poor honest men!

With no heart for fight,
We take refuge in flight,
But fire as we run, our retreat to defend,
Until our stern-chasers
Cut up her fore-braces,
And she flies off the wind from us poor honest men!

Twix' the Forties and Fifties,
South-eastward the drift is,
And so, when we think we are making Land's End,
Alas, it is Ushant
With half the King's Navy,
Blockading French ports against poor honest men!

But they may not quit station
(Which is our salvation)
So swiftly we stand to the Nor'ard again;
And finding the tail of
A homeward-bound convoy,
We slip past the Scillies like poor honest men.

Twix' the Lizard and Dover,
We hand our stuff over,
Though I may not inform how we do it, nor when.
But a light on each quarter,

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Low down on the water,
Is well understood by poor honest men.

Even then we have dangers,
From meddlesome strangers,
Who spy on our business and are not content
To take a smooth answer,
Except with a handspike . . .
And they say they are murdered by poor honest men !

To be drowned or be shot
Is our natural lot,
Why should we, moreover, be hanged in the end—
After all our great pains
For to dangle in chains
As though we were smugglers, not poor honest men?

‘WHEN THE GREAT ARK’

‘WHEN THE GREAT ARK’

WHEN the Great Ark, in Vigo Bay,
Rode stately through the half-manned fleet,
From every ship about her way
She heard the mariners entreat—
‘Before we take the seas again
Let down your boats and send us men!

‘We have no lack of victual here
With work—God knows!—enough for a l,
To hand and reef and watch and steer,
Because our present strength is small.
While your three decks are crowded so
Your crews can scarcely stand or go.

‘In war, your numbers do but raise ;
Confusion and divided will;
In storm, the mindless deep obeys
Not multitudes but single skill.
In calm, your numbers, closely pressed,
Must breed a mutiny or pest.

‘We, even on unchallenged seas,
Dare not adventure where we would,
But forfeit brave advantages
For lack of men to make ’em good;
Whereby, to England’s double cost,
Honour and profit both are lost!’

SONGS FROM BOOKS

PROPHETS AT HOME

PROPHETS have honour all over the Earth,
Except in the village where they were born,
Where such as knew them boys from birth
Nature-ally hold 'em in scorn.

When Prophets are naughty and young and vain,
They make a won'erful grievance of it;
(You can see by their writings how they complain),
But Oh, 'tis won'erful good for the Prophet!

There's nothing Nineveh Town can give
(Nor being swallowed by whales between),
Makes up for the place where a man's folk live,
Which don't care nothing what he has been.
He might ha' been that, or he might ha' been this,
But they love and they hate him for what he is.

JUBAL AND TUBAL CAIN

JUBAL AND TUBAL CAIN

(CANADIAN)

JUBAL sang of the Wrath of God
And the curse of thistle and thorn—
But Tubal got him a pointed rod,
And scrabbled the earth for corn.
Old—old as that early mould,
Young as the sprouting grain—
Yearly green is the strife between
Jubal and Tubal Cain!

Jubal sang of the new-found sea,
And the love that its waves divide—
But Tubal hollowed a fallen tree
And passed to the further side.
Black—black as the hurricane-wrack,
Salt as the under-main—
Bitter and cold is the hate they hold—
Jubal and Tubal Cain!

Jubal sang of the golden years
When wars and wounds shall cease—
But Tubal fashioned the hand-flung spears
And showed his neighbours peace.
New—new as the Nine-point-Two,
Older than Lamech's slain—
Roaring and loud is the feud avowed
Twix' Jubal and Tubal Cain!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Jubal sang of the cliffs that bar
And the peaks that none may crown—
But Tubal clambered by jut and scar
And there he builded a town.
High—high as the snowsheds lie,
Low as the culverts drain—
Wherever they be they can never agree—
Jubal and Tubal Cain!

THE VOORTREKKER

THE VOORTREKKER

THE gull shall whistle in his wake, the blind wave break
in fire.

He shall fulfil God's utmost will, unknowing His desire.
And he shall see old planets change and alien stars arise,
And give the gale his seaworn sail in shadow of few
skies.

Strong lust of gear shall drive him forth and hunger
arm his hand,

To win his food from the desert rude, his pittance
from the sand.

His neighbours' smoke shall vex his eyes, their voices
break his rest.

He shall go forth till south is north, sullen and dis-
possessed.

He shall desire loneliness and his desire shall bring,
Hard on his heels, a thousand wheels, a People and a
King.

He shall come back on his own track, and by his scarce-
cooled camp

There shall he meet the roaring street, the derrick and
the stamp:

There he shall blaze a nation's ways with hatchet and
with brand, ~~mark the way to the land~~

Till on his last-won wilderness an Empire's outposts
stand!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

A SCHOOL SONG

(Prelude to *Stalky & Co.*)

*'LET us now praise famous men'—
Men of little showing—
For their work continueth,
And their work continueth,
Broad and deep continueth,
Greater than their knowing!*

Western wind and open surge
Took us from our mothers,
Flung us on a naked shore
(Twelve bleak houses by the shore!
Seven summers by the shore!)
'Mid two hundred brothers.

There we met with famous men
Set in office o'er us;
And they beat on us with rods—
Faithfully with many rods—
Daily beat us on with rods,
For the love they bore us!

Out of Egypt unto Troy—
Over Himalaya—
Far and sure our bands have gone—
Hy-Brazil or Babylon,
Islands of the Southern Run,
And Cities of Cathaia!

A SCHOOL SONG

And we all praise famous men—
Ancients of the College;
For they taught us common sense—
Tried to teach us common sense—
Truth and God's Own Common Sense,
Which is more than knowledge!

Each degree of Latitude
Strung about Creation
Seeth one or more of us
(Of one muster each of us),
Diligent in that he does,
Keen in his vocation.

This we learned from famous men,
Knowing not its uses,
When they showed, in daily work,
Man must finish off his work—
Right or wrong, his daily work—
And without excuses.

Servants of the Staff and chain,
Mine and fuse and grapnel—
Some, before the face of Kings,
Stand before the face of Kings;
Bearing gifts to divers Kings—
Gifts of case and shrapnel.

This we learned from famous men
Teaching in our borders,
Who declared it was best,
Safest, easiest, and best—
Expeditious, wise, and best—
To obey your orders.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Some beneath the further stars
Bear the greater burden:
Set to serve the lands they rule,
(Save he serve no man may rule),
Serve and love the lands they rule;
Seeking praise nor guerdon.

This we learned from famous men,
Knowing not we learned it.
Only, as the years went by—
Lonely, as the years went by—
Far from help as years went by,
Plainer we discerned it.

Wherefore praise we famous men
From whose bays we borrow—
They that put aside To-day—
All the joys of their To-day—
And with toil of their To-day
Bought for us To-morrow!

*Bless and praise we famous men—
Men of little showing—
For their work continueth,
And their work continueth,
Broad and deep continueth,
Great beyond their knowing!*

THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE

THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE

*NOW this is the Law of the Jungle—as old and as true as
the sky;
And the Wolf that shall keep it may prosper, but the Wolf
that shall break it must die.*

*As the creeper that girdles the tree-trunk the Law runneth
forward and back—
For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of
the Wolf is the Pack.*

Wash daily from nose-tip to tail-tip; drink deeply,
but never too deep,
And remember the night is for hunting, and forget
not the day is for sleep.

The Jackal may follow the Tiger, but, Cub, when thy
whiskers are grown,
Remember the Wolf is a hunter—go forth and get
food of thine own.

Keep peace with the Lords of the Jungle—the Tiger,
the Panther, the Bear;
And trouble not Hathi the Silent, and mock not the
Boar in his lair.

When Pack meets with Pack in the Jungle, and neither
will go from the trail,
Lie down till the leaders have spoken—it may be fair
words shall prevail.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

When ye fight with a Wolf of the Pack, ye must fight
him alone and afar,
Lest others take part in the quarrel, and the Pack be
diminished by war.

The Lair of the Wolf is his refuge, and where he has
made him his home,
Not even the Head Wolf may enter, not even the
Council may come.

The Lair of the Wolf is his refuge, but where he has
dugged it too plain,
The Council shall send him a message, and so he shall
change it again.

If ye kill before midnight, be silent, and wake not the
woods with your bay,
Lest ye frighten the deer from the crops, and the bro-
thers go empty away.

Ye may kill for yourselves, and your mates, and your
cubs as they need, and ye can;
But kill not for pleasure of killing, and *seven times*
never kill Man!

If ye plunder his Kill from a weaker, devour not all
in thy pride;
Pack-Right is the right of the meanest; so leave him
the head and the hide.

The Kill of the Pack is the meat of the Pack. Ye must
eat where it lies;
And no one may carry away of that meat to his lair,
or he dies.

THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE

The Kill of the Wolf is the meat of the Wolf. He may
do what he will,
But, till he has given permission, the Pack may not
eat of that Kill.

Cub-Right is the right of the Yearling. From all of
his Pack he may claim
Full-gorge when the killer has eaten; and none may
refuse him the same.

Lair-Right is the right of the Mother. From all of her
year she may claim
One haunch of each Kill for her litter; and none may
deny her the same.

Cave-Right is the right of the Father—to hunt by himself
for his own:
He is freed of all calls to the Pack; he is judged by the
Council alone.

Because of his age and his cunning, because of his gripe
and his paw,
In all that the Law leaveth open, the word of the Head
Wolf is Law.

*Now these are the Laws of the Jungle, and many and
mighty are they;
But the head and the hoof of the Law and the haunch and
the hump is—Obey!*

‘A SERVANT WHEN HE REIGNETH’

For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear. For a servant when he reigneth, and a fool when he is filled with meat; for an odious woman when she is married, and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.—*Proverbs xxx. 21-23.*

THREE things make Earth unquiet,
And four she cannot brook.
The godly Agur counted them
And put them in a book—
Those Four Tremendous Curses
With which mankind is cursed;
But a Servant when He Reigneth
Old Agur entered first.

An Handmaid that is Mistress
We need not call upon.
A Fool when he is full of Meat
Will fall asleep anon.
An Odious Woman Married
May bear a babe and mend;
But a Servant when He Reigneth
Is Confusion to the end.

His feet are swift to tumult,
His hands are slow to toil,
His ears are deaf to reason,
His lips are loud in broil.

‘A SERVANT WHEN HE REIGNETH’

He knows no use for power
Except to show his might.
He gives no heed to judgment
Unless it prove him right.

Because he served a master
Before his Kingship came,
And hid in all disaster
Behind his master's name,
So, when his Folly opens
The unnecessary hells,
A Servant when He Reigneth
Throws the blame on some one else.

His vows are lightly spoken,
His faith is hard to bind,
His trust is easy broken,
He fears his fellow-kind.
The nearest mob will move him
To break the pledge he gave—
Oh, a Servant when He Reigneth
Is more than ever slave!

‘OUR FATHERS OF OLD’

EXCELLENT herbs had our fathers of old—

Excellent herbs to ease their pain—

Alexanders and Marigold,

Eyebright, Orris, and Elecampane—

Basil, Rocket, Valerian, Rue,

(Almost singing themselves they run)

Vervain, Dittany, Call-me-to-you—

Cowslip, Melilot, Rose of the Sun.

Anything green that grew out of the mould

Was an excellent herb to our fathers of old.

Wonderful tales had our fathers of old,

Wonderful tales of the herbs and the stars—

The Sun was Lord of the Marigold,

Basil and Rocket belonged to Mars.

Pat as a sum in division it goes—

(Every herb had a planet bespoke)—

Who but Venus should govern the Rose?

Who but Jupiter own the Oak?

Simply and gravely the facts are told

In the wonderful books of our fathers of old.

Wonderful little, when all is said,

Wonderful little our fathers knew.

Half their remedies cured you dead—

Most of their teaching was quite untrue—

‘Look at the stars when a patient is ill

(Dirt has nothing to do with disease),

Bleed and blister as much as you will,

Blister and bleed him as oft as you please.’

‘OUR FATHERS OF OLD’

Whence enormous and manifold
Errors were made by our fathers of old.

Yet when the sickness was sore in the land,
And neither planets nor herbs assuaged,
They took their lives in their lancet-hand
And, oh, what a wonderful war they waged!
Yes, when the crosses were chalked on the door -
(Yes, when the terrible dead-cart rolled!)
Excellent courage our fathers bore—
Excellent heart had our fathers of old.
None too learned, but nobly bold,
Into the fight went our fathers of old.

If it be certain, as Galen says—
And sage Hippocrates holds as much—
‘That those afflicted by doubts and dismays
Are mightily helped by a dead man’s touch,’
Then, be good to us, stars above!
Then, be good to us, herbs below!
We are afflicted by what we can prove,
We are distracted by what we know.
So—ah, so!
Down from your heaven or up from your mould,
Send us the hearts of our fathers of old!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE HERITAGE

OUR fathers in a wondrous age,
Ere yet the Earth was small,
Ensured to us an heritage,
And doubted not at all
That we, the children of their heart,
Which then did beat so high,
In later time should play like part
For our posterity.

A thousand years they steadfast built,
To 'vantage us and ours,
The Walls that were a world's despair,
The sea-constraining Towers:
Yet in their midmost pride they knew,
And unto Kings made known,
Not all from these their strength they drew,
Their faith from brass or stone.

Youth's passion, manhood's fierce intent,
With age's judgment wise,
They spent, and counted not they spent,
At daily sacrifice.
Not lambs alone nor purchased doves
Or tithe of trader's gold—
Their lives most dear, their dearer loves,
They offered up of old.

Refraining e'en from lawful things,
They bowed the neck to bear

THE HERITAGE

The unadornèd yoke that brings
 Stark toil and sternest care.
Wherefore through them is Freedom sure;
 Wherefore through them we stand,
From all but sloth and pride secure,
 In a delightful land.

Then, fretful, murmur not they gave
 So great a charge to keep,
Nor dream that awestruck Time shall save
 Their labour while we sleep.
Dear-bought and clear, a thousand year.
 Our fathers' title runs.
Make we likewise their sacrifice,
 Defrauding not our sons.

SONG OF THE FIFTH RIVER

WHEN first by Eden Tree
The Four Great Rivers ran,
To each was appointed a Man
Her Prince and Ruler to be.

But after this was ordained,
(The ancient legends tell),
There came dark Israel,
For whom no River remained.

Then He Whom the Rivers obey
Said to him: 'Fling on the ground
A handful of yellow clay,
And a Fifth Great River shall run,
Mightier than these Four,
In secret the Earth around;
And Her secret evermore
Shall be shown to thee and thy Race.'

So it was said and done.
And, deep in the veins of Earth,
And, fed by a thousand springs
That comfort the market-place,
Or sap the power of Kings,
The Fifth Great River had birth,
Even as it was foretold—
The Secret River of Gold!

SONG OF THE FIFTH RIVER

And Israel laid down
His sceptre and his crown,
To brood on that River bank,
Where the waters flashed and sank,
And burrowed in earth and fell,
And bided a season below,
For reason that none might know,
Save only Israel.

He is Lord of the Last—
The Fifth, most wonderful, Flood.
He hears Her thunder past
And Her song is in his blood.
He can foresay: 'She will fall,'
For he knows which fountain dries
Behind which desert-belt
A thousand leagues to the South.

He can foresay: 'She will rise.'
He knows what far snows melt
Along what mountain-wall
A thousand leagues to the North.
He snuffs the coming drouth
As he snuffs the coming rain,
He knows what each will bring forth,
And turns it to his gain.

A Ruler without a Throne,
A Prince without a Sword,
Israel follows his quest.
In every land a guest,

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Of many lands a lord,
In no land King is he.
But the Fifth Great River keeps
The secret of Her deeps
For Israel alone,
As it was ordered to be.

THE CHILDREN'S SONG

THE CHILDREN'S SONG

LAND of our Birth, we pledge to thee
Our love and toil in the years to be;
When we are grown and take our place
As men and women with our race.

Father in Heaven Who lovest all,
Oh, help Thy children when they call;
That they may build from age to age
An undefilèd heritage.

Teach us to bear the yoke in youth,
With steadfastness and careful truth;
That, in our time, Thy Grace may give
The Truth whereby the Nations live.

Teach us to rule ourselves alway,
Controlled and cleanly night and day;
That we may bring, if need arise,
No maimed or worthless sacrifice.

Teach us to look in all our ends,
On Thee for judge, and not our friends;
That we, with Thee, may walk uncowed
By fear or favour of the crowd.

Teach us the Strength that cannot seek,
By deed or thought, to hurt the weak;
That, under Thee, we may possess
Man's strength to comfort man's distress.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Teach us Delight in simple things,
And Mirth that has no bitter springs;
Forgiveness free of evil done,
And Love to all men 'neath the sun!

*Land of our Birth, our faith, our pride,
For whose dear sake our fathers died;
O Motherland, we pledge to thee
Head, heart, and hand through the years to be!*

PARADE-SONG OF THE CAMP-ANIMALS

PARADE-SONG OF THE CAMP-ANIMALS

ELEPHANTS OF THE GUN-TEAMS

WE lent to Alexander the strength of Hercules,
The wisdom of our foreheads, the cunning of our
knees.

We bowed our necks to service—they ne'er were
loosed again,—

Make way there, way for the ten-foot teams
Of the Forty-Pounder train!

GUN-BULLOCKS

Those heroes in their harness avoid a cannon-ball,
And what they know of powder upsets them one
and all;

Then *we* come into action and tug the guns again,—
Make way there, way for the twenty yoke

Of the Forty-Pounder train!

CAVALRY HORSES

By the brand on my withers, the finest of tunes
Is played by the Lancers, Hussars, and Dragoons,
And it's sweeter than 'Stables' or 'Water' to me,
The Cavalry Canter of 'Bonnie Dundee!'

Then feed us and break us and handle and groom,
And give us good riders and plenty of room,
And launch us in column of squadron and see
The Way of the War-horse to 'Bonnie Dundee!'

SONGS FROM BOOKS

SCREW-GUN MULES

As me and my companions were scrambling up a hill,
The path was lost in rolling stones, but we went forward still;
For we can wriggle and climb, my lads, and turn up everywhere,
And it's our delight on a mountain height, with a leg or two to spare!

Good luck to every Sergeant, then, that lets us pick our road!
Bad luck to all the driver-men that cannot pack a load!
For we can wriggle and climb, my lads, and turn up everywhere,
And it's our delight on a mountain height, with a leg or two to spare!

COMMISSARIAT CAMELS

We haven't a camelty tune of our own
To help us trollop along,
But every neck is a hair-trombone
(*Rtt-ta-ta-ta!* is a hair-trombone!)
And this is our marching song:
Can't! Don't! Shan't! Won't!
Pass it along the line!
Somebody's pack has slid from his back,
'Wish it were only mine!
Somebody's load has tipped off in the road-

PARADE-SONG OF THE CAMP-ANIMALS

Cheer for a halt and a row!
Urrr! Yarrh! Grr! Arrh!
Somebody's catching it now!

ALL THE BEASTS TOGETHER

Children of the Camp are we,
Serving each in his degree;
Children of the yoke and goad,
Pack and harness, pad and load.
See our line across the plain,
Like a heel-rope bent again,
Reaching, writhing, rolling far,
Sweeping all away to war!
While the men that walk beside
Dusty, silent, heavy-eyed,
Cannot tell why we or they
March and suffer day by day.
*Children of the Camp are we,
Serving each in his degree;
Children of the yoke and goad,
Pack and harness, pad and load!*

SONGS FROM BOOKS

IF—

IF you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,

IF—

If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE PRODIGAL SON

(Western Version)

HERE come I to my own again,
Fed, forgiven, and known again,
Claimed by bone of my bone again
And cheered by flesh of my flesh.
The fatted calf is dressed for me,
But the husks have greater zest for me.
I think my pigs will be best for me,
So I'm off to the Yards afresh.

I never was very refined, you see,
(And it weighs on my brother's mind, you see)
But there's no reproach among swine, d'you see,
For being a bit of a swine.
So I'm off with wallet and staff to eat
The bread that is three parts chaff to wheat.
But glory be!—there's a laugh to it,
Which isn't the case when we dine.

My father glooms and advises me,
My brother sulks and despises me,
And Mother catechises me
Till I want to go out and swear.
And, in spite of the butler's gravity,
I know that the servants have it I
Am a monster of moral depravity,
And I'm damned if I think it's fair!

THE PRODIGAL SON

I wasted my substance, I know I did,
On riotous living, so I did,
But there's nothing on record to show I did
Worse than my betters have done.
They talk of the money I spent out there—
They hint at the pace that I went out there—
But they all forget I was sent out there
Alone as a rich man's son.

So I was a mark for plunder at once,
And lost my cash (can you wonder?) at once,
But I didn't give up and knock under at once.
I worked in the Yards, for a spell,
Where I spent my nights and my days with dogs,
And shared their milk and maize with hogs,
Till, I guess, I have learned what pays with hogs
And—I have that knowledge to sell!

So back I go to my job again,
Not so easy to rob again,
Nor quite so ready to sob again
On any neck that's around.
I'm leaving, Pater. Good-bye to you!
God bless you, Mater! I'll write to you. . . .
I wouldn't be impolite to you,
But, Brother, you *are* a hound!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE NECESSITARIAN

I KNOW not in Whose hands are laid
To empty upon Earth
From unsuspected ambushade
The very Urns of Mirth;

Who bids the Heavenly Lark arise
And cheer our solemn round—
The Jest beheld with streaming eyes
And grovellings on the ground;

Who joins the flats of Time and Chance
Behind the prey preferred,
And thrones on Shrieking Circumstance
The Sacredly Absurd,

Till Laughter, voiceless through excess,
Waves mute appeal and sore,
Above the midriff's deep distress,
For breath to laugh once more.

No creed hath dared to hail Him Lord,
No raptured choirs proclaim,
And Nature's strenuous Overword
Hath nowhere breathed His Name.

Yet, it must be, on wayside jape,
The selfsame Power bestows
The selfsame power as went to shape
His Planet or His Rose.

THE JESTER

THE JESTER

THERE are three degrees of bliss
At the foot of Allah's Throne,
And the highest place is his
Who saves a brother's soul
At peril of his own.
There is the Power made known !

There are three degrees of bliss
In the Gardens of Paradise,
And the second place is his
Who saves his brother's soul
By excellent advice.
For there the Glory lies !

There are three degrees of bliss
And three abodes of the Blest,
And the lowest place is his
Who has saved a soul by a jest
And a brother's soul in sport . .
But there do the Angels resort !

SONGS FROM BOOKS

A SONG OF TRAVEL

(CANADIAN)

WHERE's the lamp that Hero lit
Once to call Leander home?
Equal Time hath shovelled it
'Neath the wrack of Greece and Rome.
Neither wait we any more
That worn sail which Argo bore.

Dust and dust of ashes close
All the Vestal Virgins' care;
And the oldest altar shows
But an older darkness there.
Age-encamped Oblivion
Tenteth every light that shone.

Yet shall we, for Suns that die,
Wall our wanderings from desire?
Or, because the Moon is high,
Scorn to use a nearer fire?
Lest some envious Pharaoh stir,
Make our lives our sepulchre?

Nay! Though Time with petty Fate
Prison us and Emperors,
By our Arts do we create
That which Time himself devours—
Such machines as well may run
'Gainst the Horses of the Sun.

A SONG OF TRAVEL

When we would a new abode,
Space, our tyrant King no more,
Lays the long lance of the road
At our feet and flees before,
Breathless, ere we overwhelm,
To submit a further realm!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE TWO-SIDED MAN

MUCH I owe to the Lands that grew—
More to the Lives that fed—
But most to Allah Who gave me two
Separate sides to my head.

Much I reflect on the Good and the True
In the Faiths beneath the sun,
But most upon Allah Who gave me two
Sides to my head, not one.

Wesley's following, Calvin's flock,
White or yellow or bronze,
Shaman, Ju-ju or Angekok,
Minister, Mukamuk, Bonze—

Here is a health, my brothers, to you,
However your prayers are said,
And praised be Allah Who gave me two
Separate sides to my head!

I would go without shirt or shoe,
Friend, tobacco or bread,
Sooner than lose for a minute the two
Separate sides of my head!

‘LUKANNON’

‘LUKANNON’

(SONG OF THE SEAL-ROOKERIES, ALEUTIAN ISLANDS)

I MET my mates in the morning (and oh, but I am
old!)

Where roaring on the ledges the summer ground-
swell rolled.

I heard them lift the chorus that drowned the breakers’
song—

The Beaches of Lukannon—two million voices strong!

*The song of pleasant stations beside the salt lagoons,
The song of blowing squadrons that shuffled down the dunes,
The song of midnight dances that churned the sea to flame—
The Beaches of Lukannon—before the sealers came!*

I met my mates in the morning (I’ll never meet them
more!);

They came and went in legions that darkened all the
shore.

And through the foam-flecked offing as far as voice
could reach

We hailed the landing-parties and we sang them up
the beach.

*The Beaches of Lukannon—the winter-wheat so tall—
The dripping, crinkled lichens, and the sea-fog drenching all!
The platforms of our playground, all shining smooth and
worn!*

The Beaches of Lukannon—the home where we were born!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

I meet my mates in the morning, a broken, scattered
band.

Men shoot us in the water and club us on the land;
Men drive us to the Salt House like silly sheep and
tame,

And still we sing Lukannon—before the sealers came.

*Wheel down, wheel down to southward! Oh, Goover-
ooska!*¹ go

*And tell the Deep-Sea Viceroy the story of our woe;
Ere, empty as the shark's egg the tempest flings ashore,
The Beaches of Lukannon shall know their sons no more!*

¹ Sea-gull.

AN ASTROLOGER'S SONG

AN ASTROLOGER'S SONG

To the Heavens above us,
Oh, look and behold
The Planets that love us
All harnessed in gold!
*What chariots, what horses,
Against us shall bide
While the Stars in their courses
Do fight on our side?*

All thought, all desires,
That are under the sun,
Are one with their fires,
As we also are one.
All matter, all spirit,
All fashion, all frame,
Receive and inherit
Their strength from the same.

Oh, man that deniest
All power save thine own,
Their power in the highest
Is mightily shown.
Not less in the lowest
That power is made clear.
(Oh, man, if thou knowest,
What treasure is here!)

Earth quakes in her throes,
And we wonder for why.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

But the blind planet knows
When her ruler is nigh;
And, attuned since Creation
To perfect accord,
She thrills in her station
And yearns to her Lord.

The waters have risen,
The springs are unbound—
The floods break their prison
And ravin around.
No rampart withstands 'em,
Their fury will last,
Till the Sign that commands 'em
Sinks low or swings past.

Through abysses unproven,
O'er gulfs beyond thought,
Our portion is woven,
Our burden is brought.
Yet They that prepare it,
Whose Nature we share,
Make us who must bear it
Well able to bear.

Though terrors o'ertake us
We'll not be afraid.
No Power can unmake us
Save that which has made:
Nor yet beyond reason
Or hope shall we fall—
All things have their season,
And Mercy crowns all!

AN ASTROLOGER'S SONG

Then, doubt not, ye fearful—

The Eternal is King—

Up, heart, and be cheerful,

And lustily sing:—

What chariots, what horses,

Against us shall bide

While the Stars in their courses

Do fight on our side?

‘THE POWER OF THE DOG’

THERE is sorrow enough in the natural way
From men and women to fill our day;
But when we are certain of sorrow in store,
Why do we always arrange for more?
*Brothers and Sisters, I bid you beware
Of giving your heart to a dog to tear.*

Buy a pup and your money will buy
Love unflinching that cannot lie—
Perfect passion and worship fed
By a kick in the ribs or a pat on the head.
*Nevertheless it is hardly fair
To risk your heart for a dog to tear.*

When the fourteen years which Nature permits
Are closing in asthma, or tumour, or fits,
And the vet’s unspoken prescription runs
To lethal chambers or loaded guns,
*Then you will find—it’s your own affair—
But . . . you’ve given your heart to a dog to tear.*

When the body that lived at your single will,
With its whimper of welcome, is stilled (how
still!),
When the spirit that answered your every mood
Is gone—wherever it goes—for good,
*You will discover how much you care,
And will give your heart to a dog to tear.*

‘THE POWER OF THE DOG’

We’ve sorrow enough in the natural way,
When it comes to burying Christian clay.
Our loves are not given, but only lent,
At compound interest of cent per cent.
Though it is not always the case, I believe,
That the longer we’ve kept ’em, the more do we
grieve:

For, when debts are payable, right or wrong,
A short-time loan is as bad as a long—
So why in—Heaven (before we are there)
Should we give our hearts to a dog to tear?

SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE RABBI'S SONG

(2 Samuel xiv. 14)

If Thought can reach to Heaven,
On Heaven let it dwell,
For fear thy Thought be given
Like power to reach to Hell;
For fear the desolation
And darkness of thy mind
Perplex an habitation
Which thou hast left behind.

Let nothing linger after—
No whimpering ghost remain,
In wall, or beam, or rafter,
Of any hate or pain.
Cleanse and call home thy spirit,
Deny her leave to cast,
On aught thy heirs inherit,
The shadow of her past.

For think, in all thy sadness,
What road our griefs may take;
Whose brain reflect our madness,
Or whom our terrors shake:
For think, lest any languish
By cause of thy distress—
The arrows of our anguish
Fly farther than we guess.

THE RABBI'S SONG

Our lives, our tears, as water,
Are spilled upon the ground.
God giveth no man quarter,
Yet God a means hath found—
Though Faith and Hope have vanished,
And even Love grows dim—
A means whereby His banished
Be not expelled from Him!

THE BEE-BOY'S SONG

*BEES! Bees! Hark to your bees!
'Hide from your neighbours as much as you please,
But all that has happened, to us you must tell,
Or else we will give you no honey to sell!'*

A Maiden in her glory,
Upon her wedding-day,
Must tell her Bees the story,
Or else they'll fly away.
Fly away—die away—
Dwindle down and leave you!
But if you don't deceive your Bees,
Your Bees will not deceive you.

Marriage, birth or buryin',
News across the seas,
All you're sad or merry in,
You must tell the Bees.
Tell 'em coming in an' out,
Where the Fanners fan,
'Cause the Bees are just about
As curious as a man!

Don't you wait where trees are,
When the lightnings play,
Nor don't you hate where Bees are,
Or else they'll pine away—
Pine away—dwine away—
Anything to leave you!
But if you never grieve your Bees,
Your Bees'll never grieve you!

THE RETURN OF THE CHILDREN

NEITHER the harps nor the crowns amused, nor the
cherubs' dove-winged races—
Holding hands forlornly the Children wandered be-
neath the Dome,
Plucking the splendid robes of the passers-by, and with
pitiful faces
Begging what Princes and Powers refused:—‘Ah, please
will you let us go home?’

Over the jewelled floor, nigh weeping, ran to them
Mary the Mother,
Kneeled and caressed and made promise with kisses,
and drew them along to the gateway—
Yea, the all-iron unbribeable Door which Peter must
guard and none other.
Straightway She took the Keys from his keeping, and
opened and freed them straightway.

Then, to Her Son, Who had seen and smiled, She said:
‘On the night that I bore Thee,
What didst Thou care for a love beyond mine or a
Heaven that was not my arm?
Didst Thou push from the nipple, O Child, to hear
the angels adore Thee
When we two lay in the breath of the kine?’ And He
said:—‘Thou hast done no harm.’

So through the Void the Children ran homeward
merrily hand in hand,

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Looking neither to left nor right where the breathless
Heavens stood still.

And the Guards of the Void resheathed their swords,
for they heard the Command:—

‘Shall I that have suffered the Children to come to Me
hold them against their will?’

MERROW DOWN

MERROW DOWN

I

THERE runs a road by Merrow Down—
A grassy track to-day it is—
An hour out of Guildford town,
Above the river Wey it is.

Here, when they heard the horse-bells ring,
The ancient Britons dressed and rode
To watch the dark Phoenicians bring
Their goods along the Western Road.

Yes, here, or hereabouts, they met
To hold their racial talks and such—
To barter beads for Whitby jet,
And tin for gay shell torques and such.

But long and long before that time
(When bison used to roam on it)
Did Taffy and her Daddy climb
That Down, and had their home on it.

Then beavers built in Broadstonebrook
And made a swamp where Bramley stands;
And bears from Shere would come and look
For Taffimai where Shamley stands.

The Wey, that Taffy called Wagai,
Was more than six times bigger then;

SONGS FROM BOOKS

And all the Tribe of Tegumai
They cut a noble figure then!

II

Of all the Tribe of Tegumai
Who cut that figure, none remain,—
On Merrow Down the cuckoos cry—
The silence and the sun remain.

But as the faithful years return
And hearts unwounded sing again,
Comes Taffy dancing through the fern
To lead the Surrey spring again.

Her brows are bound with bracken-fronds,
And golden elf-locks fly above;
Her eyes are bright as diamonds
And bluer than the sky above.

In moccasins and deer-skin cloak,
Unfearing, free and fair she flits,
And lights her little damp-wood smoke
To show her Daddy where she flits.

For far—oh, very far behind,
So far she cannot call to him,
Comes Tegumai alone to find
The daughter that was all to him!

OLD MOTHER LAIDINWOOL

OLD MOTHER LAIDINWOOL

(Enlarged from Old Song)

OLD Mother Laidinwool had nigh twelve months been dead.

She heard the hops was doing well, an' so poppe d up her head,

For said she: 'The lads I've picked with when I was young an' fair,

They're bound to be at hopping an' I'm bound to neet 'em there!'

Let me up an' go

Back to the work I know, Lord!

Back to the work I know, Lord!

For it's dark where I lie down, My Lord!

An' it's dark where I lie down!

Old Mother Laidinwool, she give her bones a shake,
An' trotted down the churchyard-path as fast as she could make.

She met the Parson walking, but she says to him, says she:—

'Oh, don't let no one trouble for a poor old ghost like me!'

'Twas all a warm September an' the hops had flourished grand.

She saw the folks get into 'em with stockin's on their hands;

SONGS FROM BOOKS

An' none of 'em was foreigners but all which she had
known,
An' Old Mother Laidinwool she blessed 'em every one.

She saw her daughters picking an' their children them-
beside,
An' she moved among the babies an' she stilled 'em
when they cried.
She saw their clothes was bought, not begged, an' they
was clean an' fat,
An' Old Mother Laidinwool she thanked the Lord
for that.

Old Mother Laidinwool she waited on all day
Until it come too dark to see an' people went away—
Until it come too dark to see an' lights began to show,
An' Old Mother Laidinwool she hadn't where to go.

Old Mother Laidinwool she give her bones a shake,
An' trotted back to churchyard-mould as fast as she
could make.
She went where she was bidden to an' there laid down
her ghost, . . .
An' the Lord have mercy on you in the Day you need
it most!

*Let me in again,
Out of the wet an' rain, Lord!
Out of the dark an' rain, Lord!
For it's best as You shall say, My Lord!
An' it's best as You shall say!*

THE LOOKING-GLASS

THE LOOKING-GLASS

(A COUNTRY DANCE)

QUEEN BESS was Harry's daughter. (Stand forward partners all!)

*In ruff and stomacher and gown
She danced King Philip down-a-down,
And left her shoe to show 'twas true—
(The very tune I'm playing you)
In Norgem at Brickwall'¹*

The Queen was in her chamber, and she was middling old.

Her petticoat was satin, and her stomacher was gold.
Backwards and forwards and sideways did she pass,
Making up her mind to face the cruel looking-glass.
The cruel looking-glass that will never show a lass
As comely or as kindly or as young as what she was!

Queen Bess was Harry's daughter. (Now hand your partners all!)

The Queen was in her chamber, a-combing of her hair.

There came Queen Mary's spirit and It stood behind her chair,
Singing, 'Backwards and forwards and sideways may you pass,
But I will stand behind you till you face the looking-glass.

¹ A pair of Queen Elizabeth's shoes are still at Brickwall House, Northiam, Sussex.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

The cruel looking-glass that will never show a lass
As lovely or unlucky or as lonely as I was !'

*Queen Bess was Harry's daughter. (Now turn your partners
all!)*

The Queen was in her chamber, a-weeping very sore.
There came Lord Leicester's spirit and It scratched
upon the door,
Singing, 'Backwards and forwards and sideways may
you pass,
But I will walk beside you till you face the looking-
glass.

The cruel looking-glass that will never show a lass
As hard and unforgiving or as wicked as you was !'

*Queen Bess was Harry's daughter. (Now kiss your partners
all!)*

The Queen was in her chamber, her sins were on her
head.

She looked the spirits up and down and statelily she
said:—

'Backwards and forwards and sideways though I've
been,

Yet I am Harry's daughter and I am England's Queen !'
And she faced the looking-glass (and whatever else
there was)

And she saw her day was over and she saw her beauty
pass

In the cruel looking-glass, that can always hurt a lass
More hard than any ghost there is or any man there
was !

THE QUEEN'S MEN

THE QUEEN'S MEN

VALOUR and Innocence
Have latterly gone hence
To certain death by certain shame attended.
Envy—ah! even to tears!—
The fortune of their years
Which, though so few, yet so divinely ended.

Scarce had they lifted up
Life's full and fiery cup
Than they had set it down untouched before them.
Before their day arose
They beckoned it to close—
Close in confusion and destruction o'er them.

They did not stay to ask
What prize should crown their task,
Well sure that prize was such as no man strives for;
But passed into eclipse,
Her kiss upon their lips—
Even Belphebe's, whom they gave their lives for!

THE CITY OF SLEEP

OVER the edge of the purple down,
Where the single lamplight gleams,
Know ye the road to the Merciful Town
That is hard by the Sea of Dreams—
Where the poor may lay their wrongs away,
And the sick may forget to weep?
But we—pity us! Oh, pity us!
We wakeful; ah, pity us!—
We must go back with Policeman Day—
Back from the City of Sleep!

Weary they turn from the scroll and crown,
Fetter and prayer and plough—
They that go up to the Merciful Town,
For her gates are closing now.
It is their right in the Baths of Night
Body and soul to steep,
But we—pity us! Ah, pity us!
We wakeful; oh, pity us!—
We must go back with Policeman Day—
Back from the City of Sleep!

Over the edge of the purple down,
Ere the tender dreams begin,
Look—we may look—at the Merciful Town,
But we may not enter in!
Outcasts all, from her guarded wall
Back to our watch we creep:

THE CITY OF SLEEP

We—pity us! Ah, pity us!

We wakeful; oh, pity us!—

We that go back with Policeman Day—
Back from the City of Sleep!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE WIDOWER

For a season there must be pain—
For a little, little space
I shall lose the sight of her face,
Take back the old life again
While She is at rest in her place.

For a season this pain must endure,
For a little, little while
I shall sigh more often than smile,
Till Time shall work me a cure,
And the pitiful days beguile.

For that season we must be apart,
For a little length of years,
Till my life's last hour nears,
And, above the beat of my heart,
I hear Her voice in my ears.

But I shall not understand—
Being set on some later love,
Shall not know her for whom I strove,
Till she reach me forth her hand,
Saying, 'Who but I have the right?'
And out of a troubled night
Shall draw me safe to the land.

THE PRAYER OF MIRIAM COHEN

THE PRAYER OF MIRIAM COHEN

FROM the wheel and the drift of Things
Deliver us, Good Lord,
And we will face the wrath of Kings,
The faggot and the sword!

Lay not Thy Works before our eyes,
Nor vex us with Thy Wars,
Lest we should feel the straining skies
O'ertrod by trampling stars.

Hold us secure behind the gates
Of saving flesh and bone,
Lest we should dream what Dream awaits
The Soul escaped alone.

Thy Path, Thy Purposes conceal
From our beleaguered realm,
Lest any shattering whisper steal
Upon us and o'erwhelm.

A veil 'twixt us and Thee, Good Lord,
A veil 'twixt us and Thee—
Lest we should hear too clear, too clear,
And unto madness see!

THE SONG OF THE LITTLE HUNTER

ERE Mor the Peacock flutters, ere the Monkey People
cry,

Ere Chil the Kite swoops down a furlong sheer,
Through the Jungle very softly flits a shadow and a
sigh—

He is Fear, O Little Hunter, he is Fear!
Very softly down the glade runs a waiting, watching
shade,

And the whisper spreads and widens far and near.
And the sweat is on thy brow, for he passes even now—
He is Fear, O Little Hunter, he is Fear!

Ere the moon has climbed the mountain, ere the rocks
are ribbed with light,

When the downward-dipping trails are dank and
drear,

Comes a breathing hard behind thee—*snuffle-snuffle*
through the night—

It is Fear, O Little Hunter, it is Fear!
On thy knees and draw the bow; bid the shrilling
arrow go;

In the empty, mocking thicket plunge the spear!
But thy hands are loosed and weak, and the blood has
left thy cheek—

It is Fear, O Little Hunter, it is Fear!

When the heat-cloud sucks the tempest, when the
slivered pine-trees fall,

When the blinding, blaring rain-squalls lash and veer,

THE SONG OF THE LITTLE HUNTER

Through the war-gongs of the thunder rings a voice
more loud than all—

It is Fear, O Little Hunter, it is Fear!

Now the spates are banked and deep; now the foot-
less boulders leap—

Now the lightning shows each littlest leaf-rib clear—
But thy throat is shut and dried, and thy heart against
thy side

Hammers: 'Fear, O Little Hunter—this is Fear!'

SONGS FROM BOOKS

GOW'S WATCH

ACT II. SCENE 2

*The Pavilion in the Gardens. Enter FERDINAND
and the KING.*

FERDINAND. YOUR tiercel's too long at hack, Sir.

He's no eyass

But a passage-hawk that footed ere we caught him,
Dangerously free o' the air. Faith, were he mine
(As mine's the glove he binds to for his tirings)
I'd fly him with a make-hawk. He's in strength—
Plumed to the very point. So manned, so weathered!
Give him the firmament God made him for
And what shall take the air of him?

THE KING. A young wing yet.

Bold—overbold on the perch, but think you, Ferdinand,
He can endure the raw skies yonder? Cozen
Advantage out of the teeth of the hurricane?
Choose his own mate against the lammer-geier?
Ride out a night-long tempest, hold his pitch
Between the lightning and the cloud it leaps from,
Never too pressed to kill?

FERDINAND. I'll answer for him.

Bating all parable, I know the Prince.
There's a bleak devil in the young, my Lord;
God put it there to save 'em from their elders
And break their fathers' hearts, but bear them scatheless
Through mire and thorns and blood if need be. Think

GOW'S WATCH

What our prime saw! Such glory, such achievements
As now our children, wondering at, examine
Themselves to see if they shall hardly equal.

But what cared we while we wrought the wonders?
Nothing!

The rampant deed contented.

THE KING. Little enough, God knows! But afterwards—after—

Then comes the reckoning. I would save him that.

FERDINAND. Save him dry scars that ache of winter nights,

Worn-out self-pity and as much of knowledge
As makes old men fear judgment? Then loose him—
loose him,

A' God's name loose him to adventure early!
And trust some random pike, or half-backed horse,
Besides what's caught in Italy, to save him.

THE KING. I know. I know. And yet. . . . What
stirs in the garden?

Enter GOW and a GARDENER bearing the PRINCE'S body.

FERDINAND. (Gods give me patience!) Gow and a
gardener

Bearing some load along in the dusk to the dunghill.
Nay—a dead branch— But as I said, the Prince—

THE KING. They've set it down. Strange they should
work so late.

GOW (*setting down the body*). Hark, you unsanctified
fool, while I set out our story. We found it, this side
the North Park wall which it had climbed to pluck
nectarines from the alley. Hark again! There was a
nectarine in its hand when we found it, and the

naughty brick that slipped from the coping beneath its foot and so caused its death, lies now under the wall for the King to see.

THE KING (*above*). The King to see! Why should he? Who's the man?

GOW. That is your tale. Swerve from it by so much as the breadth of my dagger and here's your instant reward. You heard not, saw not, and by the Horns of ninefold-cuckolded Jupiter you thought not nor dreamed not anything more or other!

THE KING. 'Ninefold-cuckolded Jupiter.' That's a rare oath! Shall we look closer?

FERDINAND. Not yet, my Lord! (I cannot hear him breathe.)

GARDENER. The North Park wall? It was so. Plucking nectarines. It shall be. But how shall I say if any ask why our Lady the Queen—

GOW (*stabs him*). Thus! Hie after the Prince and tell him y'are the first fruits of his nectarine tree. Bleed there behind the laurels.

THE KING. Why did Gow buffet the clown? What said he? I'll go look.

FERDINAND (*above*). Save yourself! It is the King!

Enter the KING and FERDINAND to GOW

GOW. God save you! This was the Prince!

THE KING. The Prince! Not a dead branch? (*Uncovers the face.*)

My flesh and blood! My son! my son! my son!

FERDINAND (*to GOW*). I had feared something of this. And that fool yonder?

GOW. Dead, or as good. He cannot speak.

GOW'S WATCH

FERDINAND. Better so.

THE KING. 'Loosed to adventure early!' Tell the tale.

GOW. Saddest truth, alack! I came upon him not a half-hour since, fallen from the North Park wall over against the Deer-park side—dead—dead!—a nectarine in his hand that the dear lad must have climbed for, and plucked the very instant, look you, that a brick slipped on the coping. 'Tis there now. So I lifted him, but his neck was as you see—and already cold.

THE KING. Oh, very cold. But why should he have troubled to climb? He was free of all the fruit in my garden, God knows! . . . What, Gow?

GOW. Surely, God knows!

THE KING. A lad's trick. But I love him the better for it. . . . True, he's past loving. . . . And now we must tell our Queen. What a coil at the day's end! She'll grieve for him. Not as I shall, Ferdinand, but as youth for youth. They were much of the same age. Playmate for playmate. See, he wears her colours. That is the knot she gave him last—last. . . . Oh God! When was yesterday?

FERDINAND. Come in! Come in, my Lord! There's a dew falling.

THE KING. He'll take no harm of it. I'll follow presently. . . .

He's all his mother's now and none of mine—
Her very face on the bride-pillow. Yet I tricked her.
But that was later—and she never guessed.
I do not think he sinned much—he's too young—
Much the same age as my Queen. God must not judge
him

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Too hardly for such slips as youth may fall in.
But I'll entreat that Throne. (*Prays by the body.*)

GOW. The Heavens hold up still. Earth opens not
and this dew's mere water. What shall a man think of
it all? (*To GARDENER.*) Not dead yet, sirrah? I bade
you follow the Prince. Despatch!

GARDENER. Some kind soul pluck out the dagger.
Why did you slay me? I'd done no wrong. I'd ha'
kept it secret till my dying day. But not now—not
now! I'm dying. The Prince fell from the Queen's
chamber window. I saw it in the nut-alley. He
was——

FERDINAND. But what made you in the nut-alley at
that hour?

GARDENER. No wrong. No more than another man's
wife. Jocasta of the still-room. She'd kissed me good-
night too; but that's over with the rest. . . . I've
stumbled on the Prince's beastly loves, and I pay for
all. Let me pass!

GOW. Count it your fortune, honest man. You
would have revealed it to your woman at the next
meeting. You fleshmongers are all one feather.
(*Plucks out the dagger.*) Go in peace and lay your death
to Fortune's door. He's sped—thank Fortune!

FERDINAND. Who knows not Fortune, glutted on
easy thrones,
Stealing from feasts as rare to coney-catch
Privily in the hedgerows for a clown,
With that same cruel-lustful hand and eye,
Those nails and wedges, that one hammer and lead,
And the very gerb of long-stored lightnings loosed
Yesterday 'gainst some King!

GOW'S WATCH

THE KING. I have pursued with prayers where my heart warns me
My soul shall overtake—

Enter the QUEEN.

THE KING. Look not! Wait till I tell you, dearest.
. . . Air! . . .

'Loosed to adventure early!' . . . I go late. (*Dies.*)

GOW. So! God hath cut off the Prince in his pleasures. Gow, to save the King, hath silenced one poor fool who knew how it befell, and now the King's dead, 'needs only that the Queen should kill Gow and all's safe for her this side o' the Judgment. . . . Señor Ferdinand, the wind's easterly. I'm for the road.

FERDINAND. My horse is at the gate. God speed you. Whither?

GOW. To the Duke, if the Queen does not lay hands on me before. However it goes, I charge you bear witness, Señor Ferdinand, I served the old King faithfully. To the death, Señor Ferdinand—to the death!

ACT IV. SCENE 4

*The Head of the Bargi Pass—in snow. GOW and
FERDINAND with their Captains.*

GOW (*to FERDINAND*). The Queen's host would be delivered me to-day—but that these Mountain Men have sent battalia to hold the Pass. They're shod, helmed and torqued with soft gold. For the rest, naked. By no argument can I persuade 'em their guilt

SONGS FROM BOOKS

carcasses against my bombards avail not. What's to do, Fox?

FERDINAND. Fatherless folk go furthest. These loud
pagans
Are doubly fatherless. Consider; they came
Over the passes, out of all man's world—
Adullamites, unable to endure
Its ancient pinch and belly-ache—full of revenges
Or wilfully forgetful. The land they found
Was manless—her raw airs uncloven by speech,
Earth without wheel-track, hoof-mark, hearth or
ploughshare
Since God created; nor even a cave where men,
When night was a new thing, had hid themselves.

GOW. Excellent. Do I fight them, or let go?

FERDINAND. Unused earth, air and water for their
spoil,
And none to make comparison of their deeds.
No unbribed dead to judge, accuse 'em or com-
fort—

Their present all their future and their past.
What should they know of reason—litters of folk—
New whelped to emptiness?

GOW. Nothing. They bar my path.

FERDINAND. Turn it, then—turn it.
Give them their triumph. They'll be wiser anon—
Some thirty generations hence.

GOW. Amen! I'm no disposed murderer. (*To the MOUNTAIN MEN.*) Most magnificent Señors! Lords of all Suns, Moons, Firmaments—Sole Architects of Yourselves and this present Universe! Yon Philosopher in the hairy cloak bids me wait only a thousand

GOW'S WATCH

years, till ye've sorted yourselves more to the likeness of mankind.

THE PRIEST OF THE MOUNTAIN MEN. There are none beside ourselves to lead the world!

GOW. That is common knowledge. I supplicate you, allow us the head of the Pass, that we may better reach the Queen's host yonder. Ye will not? Why?

THE PRIEST. Because it is our will. There is none other law for all the earth.

GOW. (That a few feet of snow on a nest of rocky mountains should have hatched this dream-people!) (To PRIEST) Ye have reason in nature—all ye've known of it. . . . But—a thousand years—I fear they will not suffice.

THE PRIEST. Go you back! We hold the passes into and out of the world. Do you defy us?

FERDINAND (to GOW). I warned you. There's none like them under Heaven. Say it!

GOW. Defy your puissance, Señors? Not I. We'll have our bombards away, all, by noon; and our poor hosts with them. And you, Señors, shall have your triumph upon us.

FERDINAND. Ah! That touches! Let them shout and blow their horns half a day and they'll not think of aught else!

GOW. Fall to your riots, then! Señors, ye have won. We'll leave you the head of the Pass—for thirty generations. (Loudly) The mules to the bombards and away!

FERDINAND. Most admirably you spoke to my poor text.

GOW. Maybe the better, Fox, because the discourse has drawn them to the head of the Pass. Meantime, our

SONGS FROM BOOKS

main body has taken the lower road, with all the Artillery.

FERDINAND. Had you no bombards here, then?

GOW. None, Innocence, at all! None, except your talk and theirs!

ACT V. SCENE 3

After the Battle. The PRINCESS by the Standard on the Ravelin.

Enter GOW, with the Crown of the Kingdom.

GOW. Here's earnest of the Queen's submission. This by her last herald—and in haste.

PRINCESS. 'Twas ours already. Where is the woman?

GOW. Fled with her horse. They broke at dawn. Noon has not struck, and you're Queen questionless.

PRINCESS. By you—through you. How shall I honour *you*?

GOW. Me? But for what?

PRINCESS. For all—all—all—

Since the realm sunk beneath us! Hear him! 'For what?'

Your body 'twixt my bosom and her knife,

Your lips on the cup she proffered for my death;

Your one cloak over me, that night in the snows,

We held the Pass at Bargi. Every hour

New strengths, to this most unbelievable last.

'Honour him?' I will honour—will honour you— . . .

'Tis at your choice.

GOW. Child, mine was long ago.

Enter FERDINAND, as from horse.

But here's one worthy honour. Welcome, Fox!

GOW'S WATCH

FERDINAND. And to you, Watchdog. This day
clenches all.

We've made it and seen it.

GOW. Is the city held?

FERDINAND. Loyally. Oh, they're drunk with loyalty
yonder.

A virtuous mood. Your bombards helped 'em to it . . .
But here's my word for you. The Lady Frances—

PRINCESS. I left her sick in the city. No harm, I pray.

FERDINAND. Nothing that she called harm. In truth,
so little

That (to Gow) I am bidden tell you, she'll be here
Almost as soon as I.

GOW. She says it?

FERDINAND. Writes.

This. (*Gives him letter.*) Yester eve. 'Twas given me by
the priest—

He with her in her hour.

GOW. So? (*Reads.*) So it is.

She will be here. (*To FERDINAND.*) And all is safe in
the city?

FERDINAND. As thy long sword and my lean wits
can make it.

You've naught to stay for. Is it the road again?

GOW. Ay. This time, not alone. . . . She will be
here?

PRINCESS. I am here. You have not looked at me
awhile.

GOW. The rest is with you, Ferdinand. . . . Then
free.

PRINCESS. And at my service more than ever. I
claim—

SONGS FROM BOOKS

(Our wars have taught me)—being your Queen, now,
claim

You wholly mine.

GOW. Then free. . . . She will be here? A little
while——

PRINCESS (*to FERDINAND*). He looks beyond, not at
me.

FERDINAND. Weariness.

We are not so young as once was. Two days' fight—
A worthy servitor—to be allowed
Some freedom.

PRINCESS. I have offered him all he would.

FERDINAND. He takes what he has taken.

The Spirit of the LADY FRANCES appears to GOW.

GOW. Frances!

PRINCESS. Distraught!

FERDINAND. An old head-blow, maybe. He has dealt
in them.

GOW (*to the Spirit*). What can the Grave against us,
O my Heart,

Comfort and light and reason in all things

Visible and invisible—my one God?

Thou that wast I these barren unyoked years

Of triflings now at end! Frances!

PRINCESS. She's old.

FERDINAND. True. By most reckonings old. They
must keep other count.

PRINCESS. He kisses his hand to the air!

FERDINAND. His ring, rather, he kisses. Yes—for sure
—the ring.

GOW'S WATCH

GOW. Dear and most dear! And now—those very arms! (*Dies.*)

PRINCESS. Oh, look! He faints. Haste, you! Unhelm him! Help!

FERDINAND. Needless. No help avails against that poison. He is sped.

PRINCESS. By his own hand? *This* hour? When I had offered—

FERDINAND. He had made other choice—an old, old choice,

Ne'er swerved from, and now patently sealed in death.

PRINCESS. He called on—the Lady Frances, was it? Wherefore?

FERDINAND. Because she was his life. Forgive, my friend—(*covers GOW's face*)

God's uttermost beyond me in all faith,
Service and passion—that I unveil at last
The secret. (*To the PRINCESS.*) Thought—dreamed you,
it was for *you*

He poured himself—for you resoldered the Crown?
Struck here, held there, amended, broke, built up
His multiplied imaginings for *you*?

PRINCESS. I thought—I thought he—

FERDINAND. Looked beyond. *Her* wish
Was the sole Law he knew. *She* did not choose
Your House should perish. Therefore he bade it stand.
Enough for him when she had breathed a word:
'Twas his to make it iron, stone, or fire,
Driving our flesh and blood before his ways
As the wind straws. Her one face unregarded
Waiting you with your mantle or your glove—

SONGS FROM BOOKS

That is the God whom he is gone to worship.

(Trumpets without. Enter the PRINCE's Heralds.

And here's the craft of Kingship begun again.

These from the Prince of Bargi—to whose sword

You owe such help as may, he thinks, be paid . . .

He's equal in blood, in fortune more than peer,

Young, most well favoured, with a heart to love—

And two States in the balance. Do you meet him?

PRINCESS. God and my Misery! I have seen Love at
last.

What shall content me after?

THE WISHING-CAPS

LIFE's all getting and giving,
I've only myself to give.
What shall I do for a living?
I've only one life to live.
End it? I'll not find another.
Spend it? But how shall I best?
Sure the wise plan is to live like a man
And Luck may look after the rest!
Largesse! Largesse, Fortune!
Give or hold at your will.
If I've no care for Fortune,
Fortune must follow me still.

Bad Luck, she is never a lady,
But the commonest wench on the street,
Shuffling, shabby and shady,
Shameless to pass or meet.
Walk with her once—it's a weakness!
Talk to her twice—it's a crime!
Thrust her away when she gives you 'good-day'
And the besom won't board you next time!
Largesse! Largesse, Fortune!
What is Your Ladyship's mood?
If I've no care for Fortune,
My Fortune is bound to be good!

Good Luck, she is never a lady,
But the cursedest quean alive!
Tricksy, wincing and jady,
Kittle to lead or drive.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Greet her—she's hailing a stranger!
Meet her—she's busking to leave!
Let her alone for a shrew to the bone,
And the hussy comes plucking your sleeve!
Largesse! Largesse, Fortune!
I'll neither follow nor flee.
If I don't run after Fortune,
Fortune must run after me!

‘BY THE HOOF OF THE WILD GOAT’

‘BY THE HOOF OF THE WILD GOAT’

By the Hoof of the Wild Goat uptossed
From the Cliff where she lay in the Sun
Fell the Stone
To the Tarn where the daylight is lost,
So she fell from the light of the Sun,
And alone!

Now the fall was ordained from the first
With the Goat and the Cliff and the Tarn ,
But the Stone
Knows only her life is accursed
As she sinks from the light of the Sun,
And alone!

O Thou Who hast builded the World,
O Thou Who hast lighted the Sun,
O Thou Who hast darkened the Tarn,
Judge Thou
The sin of the Stone that was hurled
By the Goat from the light of the Sun,
As she sinks in the mire of the Tarn,
Even now—even now—even now!

SONG OF THE RED WAR-BOAT

(A.D. 683)

SHOVE off from the wharf-edge! Steady!
Watch for a smooth! Give way!
If she feels the lop already
She'll stand on her head in the bay.
It's ebb—it's dusk—it's blowing—
The shoals are a mile of white,
But (snatch her along!) we're going
To find our master to-night.

*For we hold that in all disaster
Of shipwreck, storm, or sword,
A Man must stand by his Master
When once he has pledged his word.*

Raging seas have we rowed in,
But we seldom saw them thus,
Our master is angry with Odin—
Odin is angry with us!
Heavy odds have we taken,
But never before such odds.
The Gods know They are forsaken.
We must risk the wrath of the Gods!

Over the crest she flies from,
Into its hollow she drops,
Cringes and clears her eyes from
The wind-torn breaker-tops,

SONG OF THE RED WAR-BOAT

Ere out on the shrieking shoulder
Of a hill-high surge she drives.
Meet her ! Meet her and hold her !
Pull for your scoundrel lives !

The thunders bellow and clamour
The harm that they mean to do !
There goes 'Thor's Own Hammer
Cracking the dark in two !
Close ! But the blow has missed her,
Here comes the wind of the blow !
Row or the squall 'll twist her
Broadside on to it !—*Row !*

Heark'ee, Thor of the Thunder !
We are not here for a jest—
For wager, warfare, or plunder,
Or to put your power to test.
This work is none of our wishing—
We would house at home if we might—
But our master is wrecked out fishing.
We go to find him to-night.

*For we hold that in all disaster—
As the Gods Themselves have said—
A Man must stand by his Master
Till one of the two is dead.*

That is our way of thinking,
Now you can do as you will,
While we try to save her from sinking
And hold her head to it still.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Bale her and keep her moving,
Or she'll break her back in the trough. . . .
Who said the weather's improving,
And the swells are taking off? . . .

Sodden, and chafed and aching,
Gone in the loins and knees—
No matter—the day is breaking,
And there's far less weight to the seas!
Up mast, and finish baling—
In oars, and out with the mead—
The rest will be two-reef sailing. . . .
That was a night indeed!

*But we hold that in all disaster
(And faith, we have found it true!)
If only you stand by your Master,
The Gods will stand by you!*

MORNING SONG IN THE JUNGLE

MORNING SONG IN THE JUNGLE

ONE moment past our bodies cast
No shadow on the plain;
Now clear and black they stride our track,
And we run home again.
In morning-hush, each rock and bush
Stands hard, and high, and raw:
Then give the Call: '*Good rest to all
That keep the Jungle Law!*'

Now, horn and pelt, our peoples melt
In covert to abide;
Now, crouched and still, to cave and hill
Our Jungle Barons glide.
Now, stark and plain, Man's oxen strain,
That draw the new-yoked plough;
Now, stripped and dread, the dawn is red
Above the lit *talao*.¹

Ho! Get to lair! The sun's affare
Behind the breathing grass:
And creaking through the young bamboo
The warning whispers pass.
By day made strange, the woods we range
With blinking eyes we scan;
While down the skies the wild duck cries:
'*The Day—the Day to Man!*'

The dew is dried that drenched our hide,
Or washed about our way;

¹ Pond or lake.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

And where we drank, the puddled bank
Is crisping into clay.
The traitor Dark gives up each mark
Of stretched or hooded claw;
Then hear the Call: '*Good rest to all
That keep the Jungle Law!*'

BLUE ROSES

BLUE ROSES

ROSES red and roses white
Plucked I for my love's delight.
She would none of all my posies—
Bade me gather her blue roses.

Half the world I wandered through,
Seeking where such flowers grew.
Half the world unto my quest
Answered me with laugh and jest.

Home I came at wintertide,
But my silly love had died,
Seeking with her latest breath
Roses from the arms of Death.

It may be beyond the grave
She shall find what she would have.
Mine was but an idle quest—
Roses white and red are best!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

A RIPPLE SONG

ONCE a ripple came to land
In the golden sunset burning—
Lapped against a maiden's hand,
By the ford returning.

*Dainty foot and gentle breast—
Here, across, be glad and rest.
'Maiden, wait!' the ripple saith;
'Wait awhile, for I am Death!'*

'Where my lover calls I go—
Shame it were to treat him coldly—
'Twas a fish that circled so,
Turning over boldly.'

*Dainty foot and tender heart,
Wait the loaded ferry-cart.
'Wait, ah, wait!' the ripple saith;
'Maiden, wait, for I am Death!'*

'When my lover calls I haste—
Dame Disdain was never wedded!
Ripple-ripple round her waist,
Clear the current eddied.

*Foolish heart and faithful hand.
Little feet that touched no lana.
Far away the ripple sped,
Ripple—ripple running red!*

BUTTERFLIES

BUTTERFLIES

EYES aloft, over dangerous places,
The children follow the butterflies,
And, in the sweat of their upturned faces,
Slash with a net at the empty skies.

So it goes they fall amid brambles,
And sting their toes on the nettle-tops,
Till, after a thousand scratches and scrambles,
They wipe their brows and the hunting stops

Then to quiet them comes their father
And stills the riot of pain and grief,
Saying, 'Little ones, go and gather
Out of my garden a cabbage-leaf.

'You will find on it whorls and clots of
Dull grey eggs that, properly fed,
Turn, by way of the worm, to lots of
Glorious butterflies raised from the dead.' . . .

'Heaven is beautiful, Earth is ugly,'
The three-dimensioned preacher saith,
So we must not look where the snail and the
slug lie
For Psyche's birth. . . . And that is our death!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

MY LADY'S LAW

THE Law whereby my lady moves
Was never Law to me,
But 'tis enough that she approves
Whatever Law it be.

For in that Law, and by that Law,
My constant course I'll steer;
Not that I heed or deem it dread,
But that she holds it dear.

Tho' Asia sent for my content
Her richest argosies,
Those would I spurn, and bid return,
If that should give her ease.

With equal heart I'd watch depart
Each spicèd sail from sight;
Sans bitterness, desiring less
Great gear than her delight.

Though Kings made swift with many a gift
My proven sword to hire—
I would not go nor serve 'em so—
Except at her desire.

With even mind, I'd put behind
Adventure and acclaim,
And clean give o'er, esteeming more
Her favour than my fame.

MY LADY'S LAW

Yet such am I, yea, such am I—
Sore bond and freest free,
The Law that sways my lady's ways
Is mystery to me!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE NURSING SISTER

(MATERNITY HOSPITAL)

OUR sister sayeth such and such,
And we must bow to her behests.
Our sister toileth overmuch,
Our little maid that hath no breasts.

A field untilled, a web unwove,
A flower withheld from sun or bee,
An alien in the Courts of Love,
And—teacher unto such as we!

We love her, but we laugh the while;
We laugh, but sobs are mixed with laughter;
Our sister hath no time to smile,
She knows not what must follow after.

Wind of the South, arise and blow,
From beds of spice thy locks shake free;
Breathe on her heart that she may know,
Breathe on her eyes that she may see!

Alas! we vex her with our mirth,
And maze her with most tender scorn,
Who stands beside the Gates of Birth,
Herself a child—a child unborn!

*Our sister sayeth such and such,
And we must bow to her behests.
Our sister toileth overmuch,
Our little maid that hath no breasts.*

THE LOVE SONG OF HAR DYAL

THE LOVE SONG OF HAR DYAL

ALONE upon the housetops to the North
I turn and watch the lightnings in the sky—
The glamour of thy footsteps in the North.
Come back to me, Beloved, or I die!

Below my feet the still bazar is laid—
Far, far below the weary camels lie—
The camels and the captives of thy raid.
Come back to me, Beloved, or I die!

My father's wife is old and harsh with years
And drudge of all my father's house am I—
My bread is sorrow, and my drink is tears.
Come back to me, Beloved, or I die!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

A DEDICATION

(Soldiers Three)

AND they were stronger hands than mine
That digged the Ruby from the earth—
More cunning brains that made it worth
The large desire of a King,
And stouter hearts that through the brine
Went down the perfect Pearl to bring.

Lo, I have wrought in common clay
Rude figures of a rough-hewn race,
Since pearls strew not the market-place
In this my town of banishment,
Where with the shifting dust I play,
And eat the bread of discontent.

Yet is there life in that I make.
O thou who knowest, turn and see—
As thou hast power over me
So have I power over these,
Because I wrought them for thy sake,
And breathed in them mine agonies.

Small mirth was in the making—now
I lift the cloth that cloaks the clay,
And, wearied, at thy feet I lay
My wares, ere I go forth to sell.
The long bazar will praise, but thou—
Heart of my heart—have I done well?

MOTHER O' MINE

MOTHER O' MINE

(Dedication to *The Light that Failed*)

If I were hanged on the highest hill,
Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!
I know whose love would follow me still.
Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!

If I were drowned in the deepest sea,
Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!
I know whose tears would come down to me,
Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!

If I were damned of body and soul,
I know whose prayers would make me whole,
Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!

THE ONLY SON

SHE dropped the bar, she shot the bolt, she fed the fire
anew,

For she heard a whimper under the sill and a great
grey paw came through.

The fresh flame comforted the hut and shone on the
roof-beam,

And the Only Son lay down again and dreamed that
he dreamed a dream.

The last ash fell from the withered log with the click
of a falling spark,

And the Only Son woke up again, and called across
the dark:—

‘Now was I born of womankind and laid in a mother’s
breast?

For I have dreamed of a shaggy hide whereon I went
to rest.

And was I born of womankind and laid on a father’s
arm?

For I have dreamed of clashing teeth that guarded me
from harm.

‘And was I born an Only Son and did I play alone?

For I have dreamed of comrades twain that bit me to
the bone.

And did I break the barley-cake and steep it in the tyre?

For I have dreamed of a youngling kid new-riven from
the byre:

For I have dreamed of a midnight sky and a midnight
call to blood

THE ONLY SON

And red-mouthed shadows racing by, that thrust me
from my food.

'Tis an hour yet and an hour yet to the rising of the
moon,

But I can see the black roof-tree as plain as it were
noon.

'Tis a league and a league to the Lena Falls where the
trooping blackbuck go,

But I can hear the little fawn that bleats behind the
doe.

'Tis a league and a league to the Lena Falls where the
crop and the upland meet,

But I can smell the wet dawn-wind that wakes the
sprouting wheat.

Unbar the door. I may not bide, but I must out and
see

If those are wolves that wait outside or my own kin
to me!

.

She loosed the bar, she slid the bolt, she opened the
door anon,

And a grey bitch-wolf came out of the dark and
fawned on the Only Son!

MOWGLI'S SONG AGAINST PEOPLE

I WILL let loose against you the fleet-footed vines—
I will call in the Jungle to stamp out your lines!
The roofs shall fade before it,
The house-beams shall fall;
And the *Karela*,¹ the bitter *Karela*,
Shall cover it all!

In the gates of these your councils my people shall
sing,
In the doors of these your garner the Bat-folk shall
cling;
And the snake shall be your watchman
By a hearthstone unswept;
For the *Karela*, the bitter *Karela*,
Shall fruit where ye slept!

Ye shall not see my strikers; ye shall hear them and
guess.
By night, before the moonrise, I will send for my cess,
And the wolf shall be your herdsman
By a landmark removed;
For the *Karela*, the bitter *Karela*,
Shall seed where ye loved!

I will reap your fields before you at the hands of a
host.
Ye shall glean behind my reapers for the bread that is
lost;

¹ A wild melon.

MOWGLI'S SONG AGAINST PEOPLE

And the deer shall be your oxen
On a headland untilled;
For the *Karela*, the bitter *Karela*,
Shall leaf where ye build!

I have untied against you the club-footed vines—
I have sent in the Jungle to swamp out your lines!
The trees—the trees are on you!
The house-beams shall fall;
And the *Karela*, the bitter *Karela*,
Shall cover you all!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

ROMULUS AND REMUS

(CANADIAN)

OH, little did the Wolf-Child care—
When first he planned his home,
What City should arise and bear
The weight and state of Rome.

A shiftless, westward-wandering tramp,
Checked by the Tiber flood,
He reared a wall around his camp
Of uninspired mud.

But when his brother leaped the Wall
And mocked its height and make,
He guessed the future of it all
And slew him for its sake.

Swift was the blow—swift as the thought
Which showed him in that hour
How unbelief may bring to naught
The early steps of Power.

Foreseeing Time's imperilled hopes
Of Glory, Grace, and Love—
All singers, Caesars, artists, Popes—
Would fail if Remus throve,

He sent his brother to the Gods,
And, when the fit was o'er,
Went on collecting turves and clods
To build the Wall once more!

THE EGG-SHELL

THE EGG-SHELL

THE wind took off with the sunset—
The fog came up with the tide,
When the Witch of the North took an Egg-shell
With a little Blue Devil inside.
'Sink,' she said, 'or swim,' she said,
'It's all you will get from me.
And that is the finish of *him*!' she said.
And the Egg-shell went to sea.

The wind fell dead with the midnight—
The fog shut down like a sheet,
When the Witch of the North heard the Egg-shell
Feeling by hand for a fleet.
'Get!' she said, 'or you're gone,' she said,
But the little Blue Devil said 'No!'
'The sights are just coming on,' he said,
And he let the Whitehead go.

The wind got up with the morning—
And the fog blew off with the rain,
When the Witch of the North saw the Egg-shell
And the little Blue Devil again.
'Did you swim?' she said. 'Did you sink?' she said,
And the little Blue Devil replied:—
'For myself I swam, but I *think*,' he said,
'There's somebody sinking outside.'

THE KING'S TASK

1902

AFTER the sack of the City, when Rome was sunk to
a name,
In the years that the lights were darkened, or ever St.
Wilfrid came,
Low on the borders of Britain (the ancient poets sing)
Between the Cliff and the Forest there ruled a Saxon
King.
Stubborn all were his people from cottar to over-
lord—
Not to be cowed by the cudgel, scarce to be schooled
by the sword;
Quick to turn at their pleasure, cruel to cross in their
mood,
And set on paths of their choosing as the hogs of
Andred's Wood.
Laws they made in the Witan—the laws of flaying
and fine—
Common, loppage and pannage, the theft and the
track of kine—
Statutes of tun and of market for the fish and the malt
and the meal—
The tax on the Bramber packhorse and the tax on the
Hastings keel.
Over the graves of the Druids and under the wreck
of Rome,
Rudely but surely they bedded the plinth of the days
to come.

THE KING'S TASK

Behind the feet of the Legions and before the Norse-
man's ire

Rudely but greatly begat they the framing of State
and Shire.

Rudely but deeply they laboured, and their labour
stands till now,

If we trace on our ancient headlands the twist of their
eight-ox plough. . . .

There came a King from Hamtun, by Bosenham he
came,

He filled Use with slaughter, and Lewes he gave to
flame.

He smote while they sat in the Witan—sudden he
smote and sore,

That his fleet was gathered at Selsea ere they mustered
at Cymen's Ore.

Blithe went the Saxons to battle, by down and wood
and mere,

But thrice the acorns ripened ere the western mark
was clear.

Thrice was the beechmast gathered, and the Beltane
fires burned

Thrice, and the beeves were salted thrice ere the host
returned.

They drove that King from Hamtun, by Bosenham
o'erthrown,

Out of Rugnor to Wilton they made his land their
own.

Camps they builded at Gilling, at Basing and Alres-
ford,

But wrath abode in the Saxons from cottar to over-
lord.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Wrath at the weary war-game, at the foe that snapped
and ran,

Wolf-wise feigning and flying, and wolf-wise snatch-
ing his man.

Wrath for their spears unready, their levies new to
the blade—

Shame for the helpless sieges and the scornful ambus-
cade.

At hearth and tavern and market, wherever the tale
was told,

Shame and wrath had the Saxons because of their
boasts of old.

And some would drink and deny it, and some would
pray and atone;

But the most part, after their anger, avouched that the
sin was their own.

Wherefore, girding together, up to the Witan they
came,

And as they had shouldered their bucklers so did they
shoulder their blame;

(For that was the wont of the Saxons, the ancient
poets sing),

And first they spoke in the Witan and then they spoke
to the King:—

‘Edward King of the Saxons, thou knowest from sire
to son,

One is the King and his People—in gain and ungain
one.

Count we the gain together. With doubtings and
spread dismays

We have broken a foolish people—but after many
days.

THE KING'S TASK

Count we the loss together. Warlocks hampered our
arms.

We were tricked as by magic, we were turned as by
charms.

We went down to the battle and the road was plain
to keep,

But our angry eyes were holden, and we struck as
they strike in sleep—

Men new shaken from slumber, sweating, with eyes
a-stare,

Little blows uncertain, dealt on the useless air.

Also a vision betrayed us and a lying tale mad : bold,
That we looked to hold what we had not and to have
what we did not hold:

That a shield should give us shelter—that a sword
should give us power—

A shield snatched up at a venture and a hilt scarce
handled an hour:

That being rich in the open, we should be strong in
the close—

And the Gods would sell us a cunning for the day that
we met our foes.

This was the work of wizards, but not with our foe
they bide,

In our own camp we took them, and their names are
Sloth and Pride.

Our pride was before the battle, our sloth ere we lifted
spear,

But hid in the heart of the people, as the fever hides in
the mere,

Waiting only the war-game, the heat of the strife, to
rise

SONGS FROM BOOKS

As the ague fumes round Oxeney when the rotting
reed-bed dries.

But now we are purged of that fever—cleansed by
the letting of blood,

Something leaner of body—something keener of
mood.

And the men new-freed from the levies return to the
fields again,

Matching a hundred battles, cottar and lord and thane;

And they talk aloud in the temples where the ancient
war-gods are;

They thumb and mock and belittle the holy harness
of war.

They jest at the sacred chariots, the robes and the
gilded staff.

These things fill them with laughter, they lean on their
spears and laugh.

The men grown old in the war-game, hither and
thither they range—

And scorn and laughter together are sire and dam of
change;

And change may be good or evil—but we know not
what it will bring;

Therefore our King must teach us. That is thy task,
O King!

POSEIDON'S LAW

POSEIDON'S LAW

WHEN the robust and Brass-bound Man commissioned
first for sea

His fragile raft, Poseidon laughed, and 'Mariner,' said
he,

'Behold, a Law immutable I lay on thee and thine,
That never shall ye act or tell a falsehood at my shrine.

'Let Zeus adjudge your landward kin, whose motive
meal and salt

At easy-cheated altars win oblivion for the fault,
But you the unhoodwinked wave shall test—the im-
mediate gulf condemn—

Except ye owe the Fates a jest, be slow to jest with
them.

'Ye shall not clear by Greekly speech, nor cozen from
your path

The twinkling shoal, the leeward beach, or Hadria's
white-lipped wrath;

Nor tempt with painted cloth for wood my fraud-
avenging hosts;

Nor make at all, or all make good, your bulwarks and
your boasts.

'Now and henceforward serve unshod, through wet
and wakeful shifts,

A present and oppressive God, but take, to aid, my
gifts—

SONGS FROM BOOKS

The wide and windward-opening eye, the large and
lavish hand,
The soul that cannot tell a lie—except upon the land !'

In dromond and in catafract—wet, wakeful, wind-
ward-eyed—
He kept Poseidon's Law intact (his ship and freight
beside),
But, once discharged the dromond's hold, the bireme
beached once more,
Splendaciously mendacious rolled the Brass-bound
Man ashore. . . .

The thranite now and thalamite are pressures low and
high,
And where three hundred blades bit white the twin-
propellers ply.
The God that hailed, the keel that sailed, are changed
beyond recall,
But the robust and Brass-bound Man he is not changed
at all !

From Punt returned, from Phormio's Fleet, from Javan
and Gadire,
He strongly occupies the seat about the tavern fire,
And, moist with much Falernian or smoked Massilian
juice,
Revenge there the Brass-bound Man his long-enforcèd
truce !

A TRUTHFUL SONG

A TRUTHFUL SONG

THE BRICKLAYER:

*I TELL this tale, which is strictly true,
Just by way of convincing you
How very little, since things were made,
Things have altered in the building trade.*

A year ago, come the middle of March,
We was building flats near the Marble Arch,
When a thin young man with coal-black hair
Came up to watch us working there.

Now there wasn't a trick in brick or stone
Which this young man hadn't seen or known;
Nor there wasn't a tool from trowel to maul
But this young man could use 'em all!

Then up and spoke the plumbyers bold,
Which was laying the pipes for the hot and cold:
'Since you with us have made so free,
Will you kindly say what your name might be?'

The young man kindly answered them:
'It might be Lot or Methusalem,
Or it might be Moses (a man I hate),
Whereas it is Pharaoh surnamed the Great.

'Your glazing is new and your plumbing's strange,
But otherwise I perceive no change;

SONGS FROM BOOKS

And in less than a month, if you do as I bid,
I'd learn you to build me a Pyramid!

THE SAILOR:

*I tell this tale, which is stricter true,
Just by way of convincing you
How very little, since things was made,
Things have altered in the shipwright's trade.*

In Blackwall Basin yesterday
A China barque re-fitting lay,
When a fat old man with snow-white hair
Came up to watch us working there.

Now there wasn't a knot which the riggers knew
But the old man made it—and better too;
Nor there wasn't a sheet, or a lift, or a brace,
But the old man knew its lead and place.

Then up and spoke the caulkyers bold,
Which was packing the pump in the afterhold:
'Since you with us have made so free,
Will you kindly tell what your name might be?'

The old man kindly answered them:
'It might be Japheth, it might be Shem,
Or it might be Ham (though his skin was dark),
Whereas it is Noah, commanding the Ark.

'Your wheel is new and your pumps are strange,
But otherwise I perceive no change;

A TRUTHFUL SONG

And in less than a week, if she did not ground,
I'd sail this hooker the wide world round !'

BOTH:

*We tell these tales, which are strictest true,
Just by way of convincing you
How very little, since things was made,
Anything alters in any one's trade!*

SONGS FROM BOOKS

A SMUGGLER'S SONG

If you wake at midnight, and hear a horse's feet,
Don't go drawing back the blind, or looking in the
street.

Them that asks no questions isn't told a lie.
Watch the wall, my darling, while the Gentlemen go
by!

Five-and-twenty ponies
Trotting through the dark—
Brandy for the Parson,
'Baccy for the Clerk;
Laces for a lady, letters for a spy,
And watch the wall, my darling, while the Gentlemen
go by!

Running round the woodlump if you chance to find
Little barrels, roped and tarred, all full of brandy-
wine,
Don't you shout to come and look, nor use 'em for
your play.
Put the brishwood back again—and they'll be gone
next day!

If you see the stable-door setting open wide;
If you see a tired horse lying down inside;
If your mother mends a coat cut about and tore;
If the lining's wet and warm—don't you ask no more!

If you meet King George's men, dressed in blue and
red,

A SMUGGLER'S SONG

You be careful what you say, and mindful what is said.
If they call you 'pretty maid,' and chuck you 'neath
the chin,
Don't you tell where no one is, nor yet where no one's
been!

Knocks and footsteps round the house—whistle: after
dark—
You've no call for running out till the house-dogs
bark.
Trusty's here, and Pincher's here, and see how lumb
they lie—
They don't fret to follow when the Gentlemen go by!

If you do as you've been told, likely there's a chance,
You'll be give a dainty doll, all the way from France,
With a cap of Valenciennes, and a velvet hood—
A present from the Gentlemen, along o' being good!
Five-and-twenty ponies
Trotting through the dark—
Brandy for the Parson,
'Baccy for the Clerk.
Them that asks no questions isn't told a lie—
Watch the wall, my darling, while the Gentlemen
go by!

KING HENRY VII AND THE SHIPWRIGHTS

(A.D. 1487)

HARRY, our King in England, from London town is
gone,
And comen to Hamull on the Hoke in the Countie of
Suthampton.
For there lay the *Mary of the Tower*, his ship of war so
strong,
And he would discover, certaynely, if his shipwrights
did him wrong.

He told not none of his setting forth, nor yet where
he would go
(But only my Lord of Arundel), and meanly did he
show,
In an old jerkin and patched hose that no man might
him mark.
With his frieze hood and cloak above, he looked like
any clerk.

He was at Hamull on the Hoke about the hour of the
tide,
And saw the *Mary* haled into dock, the winter to
abide,
With all her tackle and habiliments which are the King
his own;
But then ran on his false shipwrights and stripped her
to the bone.

KING HENRY VII AND THE SHIPWRIGHTS

They heaved the main-mast overboard, that was of a
trusty tree,
And they wrote down it was spent and lost by force
of weather at sea.
But they sawen it into planks and strakes as far as it
might go,
To maken beds for their own wives and little children
also.

There was a knave called Slingawai, he crope be iewth
the deck,
Crying: 'Good felawes, come and see! The ship is
nigh a wreck!
For the storm that took our tall main-mast, it blew so
fierce and fell,
Alack! it hath taken the kettles and pans, and this brass
pott as well!'

With that he set the pott on his head and hied him up
the hatch,
While all the shipwrights ran below to find what they
might snatch;
All except Bob Brygandyne, and he was a yeoman
good,
He caught Slingawai round the waist and threw him
on to the mud.

'I have taken plank and rope and nail, without the
King his leaf,
After the custom of Portesmouth, but I will not suffer
a thief.

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Nay, never lift up thy hand at me—there's no clean hands in the trade.

Steal in measure,' quo' Brygandyne. 'There's measure in all things made!'

'Gramercy, yeoman!' said our King. 'Thy counsel liketh me.'

And he pulled a whistle out of his neck and whistled whistles three.

Then came my Lord of Arundel pricking across the down,

And behind him the Mayor and Burgesses of merry Suthampton town.

They drew the naughty shipwrights up, with the kettles in their hands,

And bound them round the forecastle to wait the King's commands.

But 'Sith ye have made your beds,' said the King, 'ye needs must lie thereon.

For the sake of your wives and little ones—felawes, get you gone!'

When they had beaten Slingawai, out of his own lips Our King appointed Brygandyne to be Clerk of all his ships.

'Nay, never lift up thy hands to me—there's no clean hands in the trade.

But steal in measure,' said Harry our King. 'There's measure in all things made!'

KING HENRY VII AND THE SHIPWRIGHTS

*God speed the Mary of the Tower, the Sovereign, and
Grace Dieu,*

*The Sweepstakes and the Mary Fortune, and the Henry
of Bristol too!*

*All tall ships that sail on the sea, or in our harbours stand,
That they may keep measure with Harry our King and
peace in Engeland!*

SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE WET LITANY

WHEN the water's countenance
Blurs 'twixt glance and second glance;
When our tattered smokes forerun
Ashen 'neath a silvered sun;
When the curtain of the haze
Shuts upon our helpless ways—
Hear the Channel Fleet at sea:
Libera nos Domine!

When the engines' bated pulse
Scarcely thrills the nosing hulls;
When the wash along the side
Sounds, a-sudden, magnified;
When the intolerable blast
Marks each blindfold minute passed;

When the fog-buoy's squatting flight
Guides us through the haggard night;
When the warning bugle blows;
When the lettered doorways close;
When our brittle townships press,
Impotent, on emptiness;

When the unseen leadsmen lean
Questioning a deep unseen;
When their lessened count they tell
To a bridge invisible;
When the hid and perilous
Cliffs return our cry to us;

THE WET LITANY

When the treble thickness spread
Swallows up our next-ahead;
When her siren's frightened whine
Shows her sheering out of line;
When—her passage undiscerned—
We must turn where she has turned,
Hear the Channel Fleet at sea:
Libera nos Domine!

THE BALLAD OF MINEPIT SHAW

ABOUT the time that taverns shut
And men can buy no beer,
Two lads went up to the keepers' hut
To steal Lord Pelham's deer.

Night and the liquor was in their heads—
They laughed and talked no bounds,
Till they waked the keepers on their beds
And the keepers loosed the hounds.

They had killed a hart, they had killed a hind,
Ready to carry away,
When they heard a whimper down the wind
And they heard a bloodhound bay.

They took and ran across the fern,
Their crossbows in their hand,
Till they met a man with a green lantern
That called and bade 'em stand.

'What are ye doing, O Flesh and Blood,
And what's your foolish will,
That you must break into Minepit Wood
And wake the Folk of the Hill?'

'Oh, we've broke into Lord Pelham's park,
And killed Lord Pelham's deer,
And if ever you heard a little dog bark
You'll know why we come here.

THE BALLAD OF MINEPIT SHAW

'We ask you let us go our way,
As fast as we can flee,
For if ever you heard a bloodhound bay
You'll know how pressed we be.'

'Oh, lay your crossbows on the bank
And drop the knife from your hand,
And though the hounds be at your flank
I'll save you where you stand!'

They laid their crossbows on the bank,
They threw their knives in the wood,
And the ground before them opened and sank
And saved 'em where they stood.

'Oh, what's the roaring in our ears
That strikes us well-nigh dumb?'
'Oh, that is just how things appears
According as they come.'

'What are the stars before our eyes
That strike us well-nigh blind?'
'Oh, that is just how things arise
According as you find.'

'And why's our bed so hard to the bones
Excepting where it's cold?'
'Oh, that's because it is precious stones
Excepting where 'tis gold.'

'Think it over as you stand,
For I tell you without fail,

SONGS FROM BOOKS

If you haven't got into Fairyland
You're not in Lewes Gaol.'

All night long they thought of it,
And, come the dawn, they saw
They'd tumbled into a great old pit,
At the bottom of Minepit Shaw.

And the keepers' hound had followed 'em close,
And broke her neck in the fall;
So they picked up their knives and their crossbows
And buried the dog. That's all.

But whether the man was a poacher too
Or a Pharisee¹ so bold—
I reckon there's more things told than are true,
And more things true than are told!

¹ A fairy.

HERIOT'S FORD

HERIOT'S FORD

'WHAT's that that hirlples at my side?'
The foe that you must fight, my lord.
'That rides as fast as I can ride?'
The shadow of your might, my lord.

'Then wheel my horse against the foe!'
He's down and overpast, my lord.
You war against the sunset-glow,
The judgment follows fast, my lord.

'Oh, who will stay the sun's descent?'
King Joshua he is dead, my lord.
'I need an hour to repent!'
'Tis what our sister said, my lord.

'Oh, do not slay me in my sins!'
You're safe awhile with us, my lord.
'Nay, kill me ere my fear begins.'
We would not serve you thus, my lord.

'Where is the doom that I must face?'
Three little leagues away, my lord.
'Then mend the horses' laggard pace!'
We need them for next day, my lord.

'Next day—next day! Unloose my cords!'
Our sister needed none, my lord.
You had no mind to face our swords,
And—where can cowards run, my lord?

SONGS FROM BOOKS

‘You would not kill the soul alive?’

’Twas thus our sister cried, my lord.

‘I dare not die with none to shrive.’

But so our sister died, my lord.

‘Then wipe the sweat from brow and cheek.’

It runnels forth afresh, my lord.

‘Uphold me—for the flesh is weak.’

You’ve finished with the Flesh, my lord!

FRANKIE'S TRADE

FRANKIE'S TRADE

OLD Horn to All Atlantic said:

(A-hay O! To me O!)

'Now where did Frankie learn his trade?

For he ran me down with a three-reef main 'l.'

(All round the Horn!)

Atlantic answered — 'Not from me!

You'd better ask the cold North Sea,

For he ran me down under all plain canvas.'

(All round the Horn!)

The North Sea answered:— 'He's my man,

For he came to me when he began—

Frankie Drake in an open coaster.

(All round the Sands!)

'I caught him young and I used him sore,

So you never shall startle Frankie more,

Without capsizing Earth and her waters.

(All round the Sands!)

'I did not favour him at all.

I made him pull and I made him haul—

And stand his trick with the common sailors.

(All round the Sands!)

'I froze him stiff and I fogged him blind,

And kicked him home with his road to find

By what he could see in a three-day snow-storm.

(All round the Sands!)

SONGS FROM BOOKS

'I learned him his trade o' winter nights,
'Twixt Mardyke Fort and Dunkirk lights
On a five-knot tide with the forts a-firing.
(All round the Sands!)

'Before his beard began to shoot,
I showed him the length of the Spaniard's foot—
And I reckon he clapped the boot on it later.
(All round the Sands!)

'If there's a risk which you can make,
That's worse than he was used to take
Nigh every week in the way of his business;
(All round the Sands!)

'If there's a trick that you can try,
Which he hasn't met in time gone by,
Not once or twice, but ten times over;
(All round the Sands!)

'If you can teach him aught that's new,
(A-hay O! To me O!)
I'll give you Bruges and Nieuport too,
And the ten tall churches that stand between 'em!
Storm along, my gallant Captains!
(All round the Horn!)

THE JUGGLER'S SONG

THE JUGGLER'S SONG

WHEN the drums begin to beat
Down the street,
When the poles are fetched and guyed,
When the tight-rope's stretched and tied,
When the dance-girls make salaam,
When the snake-bag wakes alarm,
When the pipes set up their drone,
When the sharp-edged knives are thrown,
When the red-hot coals are shown,
To be swallowed by and by—
Arré, Brethren, here come I!

Stripped to loin-cloth in the sun,
Search me well and watch me close!
Tell me how my tricks are done—
Tell me how the mango grows!

Give a man who is not made ✓
To his trade
Swords to fling and catch again,
Coins to ring and snatch again,
Men to harm and cure again,
Snakes to charm and lure again—
He'll be hurt by his own blade, ✓
By his serpents disobeyed,
By his clumsiness bewrayed,
By the people laughed to scorn— ✓
So 'tis not with juggler born!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Pinch of dust or withered flower,
Chance-flung nut or borrowed staff,
Serve his need and shore his power,
Bind the spell or loose the laugh!

THORKILD'S SONG

THORKILD'S SONG

THERE'S no wind along these seas,
Out oars for Stavanger!
Forward all for Stavanger!
So we must wake the white-ash breeze.
Let fall for Stavanger!
A long pull for Stavanger!

Oh, hear the benches creak and strain!
(A long pull for Stavanger!)
She thinks she smells the Northland rain!
(A long pull for Stavanger!)

She thinks she smells the Northland snow,
And she's as glad as we to go.

She thinks she smells the Northland rime,
And the dear dark nights of winter-time.

She wants to be at her own home pier,
To shift her sails and standing gear.

She wants to be in her winter-shed,
To strip herself and go to bed.

Her very bolts are sick for shore,
And we—we want it ten times more!

So all you Gods that love brave men,
Send us a three-reef gale again!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Send us a gale, and watch us come,
With close-cropped canvas slashing home!

*But—there's no wind on all these seas,
A long pull for Stavanger!*
So we must wake the white-ash breeze,
A long pull for Stavanger!

‘ANGUTIVAUN TAINA’

‘ANGUTIVAUN TAINA’

SONG OF THE RETURNING HUNTER (ESQUIMAUX)

OUR gloves are stiff with the frozen blood,
Our furs with the drifted snow,
As we come in with the seal—the seal!
In from the edge of the floe.

Au jana! Aua! Oha! Haq!
And the yelping dog-teams go;
And the long whips crack, and the men come back,
Back from the edge of the floe!

We tracked our seal to his secret place,
We heard him scratch below,
We made our mark, and we watched beside,
Out on the edge of the floe.

We raised our lance when he rose to breathe,
We drove it downward—so!
And we played him thus, and we killed him thus,
Out on the edge of the floe.

Our gloves are glued with the frozen blood,
Our eyes with the drifting snow;
But we come back to our wives again,
Back from the edge of the floe!

Au jana! Aua! Oha! Haq!
And the loaded dog-teams go;
And the wives can hear their men come back,
Back from the edge of the floe!

SONGS FROM BOOKS

HUNTING SONG OF THE SEEONEE PACK

As the dawn was breaking the Sambhur belled—

Once, twice and again!

And a doe leaped up, and a doe leaped up

From the pond in the wood where the wild deer sup.

This I, scouting alone, beheld,

Once, twice and again!

As the dawn was breaking the Sambhur belled—

Once, twice and again!

And a wolf stole back, and a wolf stole back

To carry the word to the waiting pack,

And we sought and we found and we bayed on his
track

Once, twice and again!

As the dawn was breaking the Wolf-Pack yelled

Once, twice and again!

Feet in the jungle that leave no mark!

Eyes that can see in the dark—the dark!

Tongue—give tongue to it! Hark! Oh, hark!

Once, twice and again!

SONG OF THE MEN'S SIDE

SONG OF THE MEN'S SIDE

(NEOLITHIC)

ONCE we feared The Beast—when he followed us we
ran,
Ran very fast though we knew
It was not right that The Beast should master Man;
But what could we Flint-workers do?
The Beast only grinned at our spears round his ears—
Grinned at the hammers that we made;
But now we will hunt him for the life with the Knife—
And this is the Buyer of the Blade!

*Room for his shadow on the grass—let it pass!
To left and right—stand clear!
This is the Buyer of the Blade—be afraid!
This is the great God Tyr!*

Tyr thought hard till he hammered out a plan,
For he knew it was not right
(And it is not right) that The Beast should master Man;
So he went to the Children of the Night.
He begged a Magic Knife of their make for our sake.
When he begged for the Knife they said:
‘The price of the Knife you would buy is an eye!’
And that was the price he paid.

*Tell it to the Barrows of the Dead—run ahead!
Shout it so the Women's Side can hear!*

SONGS FROM BOOKS

This is the Buyer of the Blade—be afraid!
This is the great God Tyr!

Our women and our little ones may walk on the
Chalk,

As far as we can see them and beyond.

We shall not be anxious for our sheep when we keep
Tally at the shearing-pond.

We can eat with both our elbows on our knees, if we
please,

We can sleep after meals in the sun,
For Shepherd-of-the-Twilight is dismayed at the
Blade,

Feet-in-the-Night have run!

Dog-without-a-Master goes away (Hai, Tyr, aie!),
Devil-in-the-Dusk has run!

Then:

Room for his shadow on the grass—let it pass!
To left and right—stand clear!

This is the Buyer of the Blade—be afraid!
This is the great God Tyr!

DARZEE'S CHAUNT

DARZEE'S CHAUNT

(Sung in honour of Rikki-Tikki-Tavi)

SINGER and tailor am I—
Doubled the joys that I know—
Proud of my lilt to the sky,
Proud of the house that I sew—
Over and under, so weave I my music—so weave I
the house that I sew.

Sing to your fledglings again,
Mother, oh, lift up your head!
Evil that plagued us is slain,
Death in the garden lies dead.
Terror that hid in the roses is impotent—flung o'er the
dung-hill and dead!

Who hath delivered us, who?
Tell me his nest and his name.
Rikki, the valiant, the true,
Tikki, with eyeballs of flame,
Rik-tikki-tikki, the ivory-fangèd, the Hunter with
eyeballs of flame.

Give him the Thanks of the Birds,
Bowling with tail-feathers spread!
Praise him with nightingale-words—
Nay, I will praise him instead.
Hear! I will sing you the praise of the bottle-tailed
Rikki, with eyeballs of red!

(Here Rikki-tikki interrupted, and the rest of the song is lost.)

SONG OF THE GALLEY-SLAVES

WE pulled for you when the wind was against us and
the sails were low.—

Will you never let us go?

We ate bread and onions when you took towns, or
ran aboard quickly when you were beaten by the
foe.

The Captains walked up and down the deck in fair
weather singing songs, but we were below.

We fainted with our chins on the oars and you did
not see that we were idle, for we still swung to
and fro.

Will you never let us go?

The salt made the oar-handles like shark-skin; our
knees were cut to the bone with salt-cracks; our
hair was stuck to our foreheads; and our lips were
cut to the gums, and you whipped us because we
could not row.

Will you never let us go?

But, in a little time, we shall run out of the portholes
as the water runs along the oar-blade, and though
you tell the others to row after us you will never
catch us till you catch the oar-thresh and tie up
the winds in the belly of the sail. Aho!

Will you never let us go?

THE FOUR ANGELS

THE FOUR ANGELS

As Adam lay a-dreaming beneath the Apple Tree
The Angel of the Earth came down, and offered
Earth in fee;

But Adam did not need it,
Nor the plough he would not speed it,
Singing:—‘Earth and Water, Air and Fire,
What more can mortal man desire?’
(The Apple Tree’s in bud.)

As Adam lay a-dreaming beneath the Apple Tree
The Angel of the Waters offered all the Seas in fee;

But Adam would not take ’em,
Nor the ships he wouldn’t make ’em,
Singing:—‘Water, Earth and Air and Fire,
What more can mortal man desire?’
(The Apple Tree’s in leaf.)

As Adam lay a-dreaming beneath the Apple Tree
The Angel of the Air he offered all the Air in fee;

But Adam did not crave it,
Nor the flight he wouldn’t brave it,
Singing:—‘Air and Water, Earth and Fire,
What more can mortal man desire?’
(The Apple Tree’s in bloom.)

As Adam lay a-dreaming beneath the Apple Tree
The Angel of the Fire rose up and not a word said he;

But he wished a Fire and made it,
And in Adam’s heart he laid it,

SONGS FROM BOOKS

Singing:—‘Fire, Fire, burning Fire!
Stand up and reach your heart’s desire!’
(The Apple Blossom’s set.)

As Adam was a-working outside of Eden-Wall,
He used the Earth, he used the Seas, he used the Air
and all;
Till out of black disaster
He arose to be the master
Of Earth and Water, Air and Fire,
But never reached his heart’s desire!
(The Apple Tree’s cut down!)

THE PRAYER

THE PRAYER

My brother kneels, so saith Kabir,
To stone and brass in heathen wise,
But in my brother's voice I hear
My own unanswered agonies.
His God is as his fates assign,
His prayer is all the world's—and mine.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

CHAPTER HEADINGS

PLAIN TALES FROM THE HILLS

LOOK, you have cast out Love! What Gods are these
You bid me please?
The Three in One, the One in Three? Not so!
To my own Gods I go.
It may be they shall give me greater ease
Than your cold Christ and tangled Trinities.

L. speth.

When the earth was sick and the skies were grey,
And the woods were rotted with rain,
The Dead Man rode through the autumn day
To visit his love again.

His love she neither saw nor heard,
So heavy was her shame;
And tho' the babe within her stirred
She knew not that he came.

The Other Man.

Cry 'Murder' in the market-place, and each
Will turn upon his neighbour anxious eyes
That ask: 'Art thou the man?' We hunted Cain,
Some centuries ago, across the world.
That bred the fear our own misdeeds maintain
To-day.

His Wedded Wife.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

Go, stalk the red deer o'er the heather,
Ride, follow the fox if you can!
But, for pleasure and profit together,
Allow me the hunting of Man—
The chase of the Human, the search for the Soul
To its ruin—the hunting of Man.

Pig.

'Stopped in the straight when the race was his own—
Look at him cutting it—cur to the bone!'
Ask ere the youngster be rated and chidden
What did he carry and how was he ridden?
Maybe they used him too much at the start.
Maybe Fate's weight-cloths are breaking his heart.

In the Pride of his Youth.

And some are sulky, while some will plunge.
(*So ho! Steady! Stand still, you!*)
Some you must gentle, and some you must lunge.
(*There! There! Who wants to kill you?*)
Some—there are losses in every trade—
Will break their hearts ere bitted and made,
Will fight like fiends as the rope cuts hard,
And die dumb-mad in the breaking-yard.

Thrown Away.

The World hath set its heavy yoke
Upon the old white-bearded folk
Who strive to please the King.
God's mercy is upon the young,
God's wisdom in the baby tongue
That fears not anything.

Tods' Amendment.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

Not though you die to-night, O Sweet, and wail,
A spectre at my door,
Shall mortal Fear make Love immortal fail—
I shall but love you more,
Who, from Death's house returning, give me still
One moment's comfort in my matchless ill.

By Word of Mouth.

They burnt a corpse upon the sand—
The light shone out afar;
It guided home the plunging dhows
That beat from Zanzibar.
Spirit of Fire, where'er Thy altars rise,
Thou art the Light of Guidance to our eyes!
In Error.

Ride with an idle whip, ride with an unusec heel,
But, once in a way, there will come a day
When the colt must be taught to feel
The lash that falls, and the curb that galls, and the
sting of the rowelled steel.
The Conversion of Aurelian McGoggin.

It was not in the open fight
We threw away the sword,
But in the lonely watching
In the darkness by the ford.
The waters lapped, the night-wind blew,
Full-armed the Fear was born and grew,
And we were flying ere we knew
From panic in the night.
The Rout of the White Hussars.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

In the daytime, when she moved about me,
In the night, when she was sleeping at my side,—
I was wearied, I was wearied of her presence.
Day by day and night by night I grew to hate her—
Would God that she or I had died!

The Bronckhorst Divorce-Case.

A stone's throw out on either hand
From that well-ordered road we tread,
And all the world is wild and strange:
*Churel*¹ and ghoul and Djinn and sprite
Shall bear us company to-night,
For we have reached the Oldest Land
Wherein the Powers of Darkness range.

In the House of Suddhoo.

To-night, God knows what thing shall tide,
The Earth is racked and fain—
Expectant, sleepless, open-eyed;
And we, who from the Earth were made,
Thrill with our Mother's pain.

False Dawn.

Pit where the buffalo cooled his hide,
By the hot sun emptied, and blistered and dried;
Log in the plume-grass, hidden and lone;
Bund where the earth-rat's mounds are strown;
Cave in the bank where the sly stream steals;
Aloe that stabs at the belly and heels,
Jump if you dare on a steed untried—
Safer it is to go wide—go wide!
Hark, from in front where the best men ride:—
'Pull to the off, boys! Wide! Go wide!'

Cupid's Arrows.

¹ The ghost of a woman who has died in childbirth.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

He drank strong waters and his speech was coarse;
He purchased raiment and forbore to pay;
He stuck a trusting junior with a horse,
And won gymkhanas in a doubtful way.
Then, 'twixt a vice and folly, turned aside
To do good deeds—and straight to cloak them, lied.
A Bank Fraud.

Thus, for a season, they fought it fair—
She and his cousin May—
Tactful, talented, debonair,
Decorous foes were they;
But never can battle of man compare
With merciless feminine fray.
The Rescue of Pluffles.

Then a pile of heads he made—
Thirty thousand heaped on high—
All to please the Kafir maid
Where the Oxus rippled by.
Grimly spake Atulla Khan:—
'Love hath made this thing a Man.'
His Chance in Life.

Rosicrucian subtleties
In the Orient had rise.
Ye may find their teachers still
Under Jacatâlâ's Hill.
Seek ye Bombast Paracelsus,
Read what Fludd the Seeker tells us
Of the Dominant that runs

CHAPTER HEADINGS

Through the Cycles of the Suns.
Read my story last and see
Luna at her apogee.

Consequences.

So we loosed a bloomin' volley,
An' we made the beggars cut,
An' when our pooch was emptied out,
We used the bloomin' butt.
Ho! My! Don't you come anigh
When Tommy is a-playin' with the baynit an' the
butt!

The Taking of Lungtungpen.

Pleasant it is for the Little Tin Gods
When great Jove nods;
But Little Tin Gods make their little mistakes
In missing the hour when great Jove wakes.
A Germ-Destroyer.

There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken any way you please, is bad,
And strands them in forsaken guts and creeks
No decent soul would think of visiting.
You cannot stop the tide; but, now and then,
You may arrest some rash adventurer,
Who—h'm—will hardly thank you for your pains.
Kidnapped.

While the snaffle holds, or the long-neck stings,
While the big beam tilts, or the last bell rings,

CHAPTER HEADINGS

While horses are horses to train and to race,
Then women and wine take a second place
 For me—for me—
 While a short 'ten-three'
Has a field to squander or fence to face!
 The Broken-Link Handicap.

Little Blind Fish, thou art marvellous wise!
Little Blind Fish, who put out thy eyes?
Open thy ears while I whisper my wish.
Bring me a lover, thou little Blind Fish!
 The Bisara of I ooree.

THE NAULAHKA

THERE was a strife 'twixt man and maid--
 Oh, that was at the birth of time!
But what befell 'twixt man and maid,
 Oh, that's beyond the grip of rhyme.
'Twas, 'Sweet, I must not bide with you,'
 And 'Love, I cannot bide alone';
For both were young, and both were true,
 And both were hard as the nether stone.
 Chapter I.

Beware the man who's crossed in love;
 For pent-up steam must find its vent.
Stand back when he is on the move,
 And lend him all the Continent.
 Chapter II.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

Your patience, Sirs. The Devil took me up
To the burned mountain over Sicily
(Fit place for me) and thence I saw my Earth—
(Not all Earth's splendour, 'twas beyond my need—)
And that one spot I love—all Earth to me,
And her I love, my Heaven. What said I?
My love was safe from all the powers of Hell—
For you—e'en you—acquit her of my guilt—
But Sula, nestling by our sail-specked sea,
My city, child of mine, my heart, my home—
Mine and my pride—evil might visit there!
It was for Sula and her naked port,
Prey to the galleys of the Algerine,
Our city Sula, that I drove my price—
For love of Sula and for love of her.
The twain were woven—gold on sackcloth—twined
Past any sundering till God shall judge
The evil and the good.

Chapter IV.

Now it is not good for the Christian's health to hustle
the Aryan brown,
For the Christian riles, and the Aryan smiles, and he
weareth the Christian down;
And the end of the fight is a tombstone white with
the name of the late deceased,
And the epitaph drear: 'A Fool lies here who tried to
hustle the East.'

Chapter V.

There is pleasure in the wet, wet clay,
When the artist's hand is potting it;
There is pleasure in the wet, wet lay,
When the poet's pad is blotting it;

CHAPTER HEADINGS

There is pleasure in the shine of your picture on the line
At the Royal Acade-my;

But the pleasure felt in these is as chalk to Cheddar
cheese

When it comes to a well-made Lie:—

To a quite unwreckable Lie,

To a most impeccable Lie!

To a water-tight, fire-proof, angle-iron, sunk-l inge,
time-lock, steel-faced Lie!

Not a private-hansom Lie,

But a pair-and-brougham Lie,

Not a little-place-at-Footing, but a country-l ouse-
with-shooting

And a ring-fence-deer-park Lie.

Chapte · VII.

When a Lover hies abroad,

Looking for his Love,

Azrael smiling sheathes his sword,

Heaven smiles above.

Earth and sea

His servants be,

And to lesser compass round,

That his Love be sooner found!

Chapter VIII.

We meet in an evil land

That is near to the gates of Hell.

I wait for thy command

To serve, to speed or withstand.

And thou sayest I do not well?

Oh, Love, the flowers so red

Are only tongues of flame.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

The earth is full of the dead,
The new-killed, restless dead.
There is danger beneath and o'erhead,
And I guard thy gates in fear
Of words thou canst not hear,
Of peril and jeopardy,
Of signs thou canst not see—
And thou sayest 'tis ill that I came?

Chapter IX.

This I saw when the rites were done,
And the lamps were dead and the Gods alone,
And the grey snake coiled on the altar-stone—
V Ere I fled from a Fear that I could not see,
And the Gods of the East made mouths at me.

Chapter XII.

Beat off in our last fight were we?
The greater need to seek the sea.
For Fortune changeth as the moon
To caravel and picaroon.
Then Eastward Ho! or Westward Ho!
Whichever wind may meetest blow.
Our quarry sails on either sea,
Fat prey for such bold lads as we,
And every sun-dried buccaneer
Must hand and reef and watch and steer,
And bear great wrath of sea and sky
Before the plate-ships wallow by.
Now, as our tall bows take the foam,
Let no man turn his heart to home,
Save to desire plunder more

CHAPTER HEADINGS

And larger warehouse for his store,
When treasure won from Santos Bay
Shall make our sea-washed village gay.

Chapter XIII.

Because I sought it far from men,
In deserts and alone,
I found it burning overhead,
The jewel of a Throne.

Because I sought— I sought it so
And spent my days to find—
It blazed one moment ere it left
The blacker night behind.

Chapter XIV.

We be the Gods of the East—
Older than all—
Masters of Mourning and Feast—
How shall we fall?

Will they gape for the husks that ye proffer,
Or yearn to your song?
And we—have we nothing to offer
Who ruled them so long—
In the fume of the incense, the clash of the cymbals,
the blare of the conch and the gong?

Over the strife of the schools
Low the day burns—
Back with the kine from the pools
Each one returns
To the life that he knows where the altar-flame glows
and the *tulsi*¹ is trimmed in the urns.

¹ The holy basil.

Chapter XIX.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

THE LIGHT THAT FAILED

So we settled it all when the storm was done
As comfy as comfy could be;
And I was to wait in the barn, my dears,
Because I was only three.
And Teddy would run to the rainbow's foot
Because he was five and a man—
And that's how it all began, my dears,
And that's how it all began!

Chapter I.

Then we brought the lances down—then the trumpets
blew—
When we went to Kandahar, ridin' two an' two.
Ridin'—ridin'—ridin' two an' two!
Ta-ra-ra-ra-ra-a!
All the way to Kandahar,
Ridin' two an' two.

Chapter II.

The wolf-cub at even lay hid in the corn,
When the smoke of the cooking hung grey.
He knew where the doe made a couch for her fawn,
And he looked to his strength for his prey.
But the moon swept the smoke-wreaths away;
And he turned from his meal in the villager's close,
And he bayed to the moon as she rose.

Chapter IV.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

'I have a thousand men,' said he,
'To wait upon my will;
And towers nine upon the Tyne,
And three upon the Till.'

'And what care I for your men?' said she,
'Or towers from Tyne to Till?
Sith you must go with me,' said she,
'To wait upon my will.'

'And you may lead a thousand men
Nor ever draw the rein,
But before you lead the Fairy Queen
'Twill burst your heart in twain.'

He has slipped his foot from the stirrup-bar,
The bridle from his hand,
And he is bound by hand and foot
To the Queen of Fairy Land.

Chapters V and VI.

'If I have taken the common clay
And wrought it cunningly
In the shape of a God that was digged a clod,
The greater honour to me.'

'If thou hast taken the common clay,
And thy hands be not free
From the taint of the soil, thou hast made thy spoil
The greater shame to thee.'

Chapter IX.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

The lark will make her hymn to God,
The partridge call her brood,
While I forget the heath I trod,
The fields wherein I stood.

'Tis dule to know not night from morn,
But greater dule to know
I can but hear the hunter's horn
That once I used to blow.

Chapter XI.

There were three friends that buried the fourth,
The mould in his mouth and the dust in his eyes,
And they went south, and east, and north—
The strong man fights, but the sick man dies.

There were three friends that spoke of the dead—
The strong man fights, but the sick man dies—
'And would he were here with us now,' they said,
'The sun in our face and the wind in our eyes.'

Chapter XII.

Yet at the last, ere our spearmen had found him,
Yet at the last, ere a sword-thrust could save,
Yet at the last, with his masters around him,
He spoke of the Faith as a master to slave.
Yet at the last, though the Kafirs had maimed him,
Broken by bondage and wrecked by the reiver,
Yet at the last, tho' the darkness had claimed him,
He called upon Allah, and died a Believer!

Chapter XIV.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

BEAST AND MAN IN INDIA

(By John Lockwood Kipling)

THEY killed a Child to please the Gods
In Earth's young penitence,
And I have bled in that Babe's stead
Because of innocence.

I bear the sins of sinful men
That have no sin of my own.
They drive me forth to Heaven's wrath
Unpastured and alone.

I am the meat of sacrifice,
The ransom of man's guilt,
For they give my life to the altar-knife
Wherever shrine is built.

The Goat.

Between the waving tufts of jungle-grass,
Up from the river as the twilight falls,
Across the dust-beclouded plain they pass
On to the village walls.

Great is the sword and mighty is the pen,
But greater far the labouring ploughman's blade—
For on its oxen and its husbandmen
An Empire's strength is laid.

The Oxen.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

The torn boughs trailing o'er the tusks aslant,
The saplings reeling in the path he trod,
Declare his might—our lord the Elephant,
Chief of the ways of God. . . .

The black bulk heaving where the oxen pant,
The bowed head toiling where the guns careen,
Declare our might—our slave the Elephant,
And servant of the Queen.

The Elephant.

Dark children of the mere and marsh,
Wallow and waste and lea,
Outcaste they wait at the village gate
With folk of low degree.

Their pasture is in no man's land,
Their food the cattle's scorn;
Their rest is mire and their desire
The thicket and the thorn.

But woe to those that break their sleep,
And woe to those that dare
To rouse the herd-bull from his keep,
The wild boar from his lair!

Pigs and Buffaloes.

The beasts are very wise,
Their mouths are clean of lies,
They talk one to the other,
Bullock to bullock's brother,
Resting after their labours,
Each in stall with his neighbours.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

But man with goad and whip
Breaks up their fellowship,
Shouts in their silky ears,
Filling their souls with fears.
When he has ploughed the land,
He says: 'They understand.'
But the beasts in stall together,
Freed from the yoke and tether,
Say as the torn flanks smoke:
'Nay, 'twas the whip that spoke.'
Of Animal Calls.

LIFE'S HANDICAP

THE doors were wide, the story saith,
Out of the night came the patient wraith
He might not speak, and he could not stie
A hair of the Baron's miniver.
Speechless and strengthless, a shadow thin.
He roved the castle to find his kin.
And oh! 'twas a piteous sight to see
The dumb ghost follow his enemy!
The Return of Imray.

Before my Spring I garnered Autumn's gain,
Out of her time my field was white with grain,
The year gave up her secrets, to my woe.
Forced and deflowered each sick season lay
In mystery of increase and decay;
I saw the sunset ere men see the day,
Who am too wise in all I should not know.
Without Benefit of Clergy.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

There's a convict more in the Central Jail,
Behind the old mud wall;
There's a lifter less on the Border trail,
And the Queen's Peace over all,
Dear boys,
The Queen's Peace over all!

For we must bear our leader's blame,
On us the shame will fall,
If we lift our hand from a fettered land
And the Queen's Peace over all,
Dear boys,
The Queen's Peace over all!
The Head of the District.

The Earth gave up her dead that tide,
Into our camp he came,
And said his say and went his way,
And left our hearts aflame.

Keep tally—on the gun-butt score
The vengeance we must take
When God shall bring full reckoning
For our dead comrade's sake!
The Man Who Was.

The sky is lead, and our faces are red,
And the Gates of Hell are opened and riven,
And the winds of Hell are loosened and driven,
And the dust flies up in the face of Heaven,
And the clouds come down in a fiery sheet,
Heavy to raise and hard to be borne.
And the soul of man is turned from his meat,
Turned from the trifles for which he has striven,

CHAPTER HEADINGS

Sick in his body and heavy-hearted,
And his soul flies up like the dust in the street—
Breaks from his flesh and is gone and departed
Like the blasts that they blow on the cholera-horn.

At the End of the Passage.

KIM

UNTO whose use the pregnant suns are poised,
With idiot moons and stars retracting stars?
Creep thou between:—thy coming's all unnoise l.

Heaven hath her high, as Earth her baser, warts.
Heir to these tumults, this affright, that fray
(By Adam's, fathers' own, sin bound alway);
Peer up, draw out thy horoscope and say

Which planet mends thy threadbare fate, or nars.

Chapter VII.

MANY INVENTIONS

'LESS you want your toes trod off you'd better get
back at once,

For the bullocks are walking two by two,
The *byles* are walking two by two,
And the elephants bring the guns.

Ho! Yuss!

Great—big—long—black—forty-pounder guns:

Jiggery-jolty to and fro,

Each as big as a launch in tow—

Blind—dumb—broad-breeched—beggars o' battering
guns!

My Lord the Elephant.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

THE DAY'S WORK

WE now, held in captivity,
Spring to our bondage nor grieve—
See now, how it is blessed, er,
Brothers, to give than receive!
Keep trust, wherefore we were made,
Paying the debt that we owe;
For a clean thrust, and the shear of the blade,
Will carry us where we would go.
The Ship that Found Herself.

COLLECTED

ALL the world over, nursing their scars,
Sit the old fighting-men broke in the wars—
Sit the old fighting-men, surly and grim,
Mocking the lilt of the conquerors' hymn.

Dust of the battle o'erwhelmed them and hid.
Fame never found them for aught that they did.
Wounded and spent to the lazar they drew,
Lining the road where the Legions roll through.

Sons of the Laurel who press to your meed,
(Worthy God's pity most—you who succeed!)
Ere you go triumphing, crowned, to the stars,
Pity poor fighting-men, broke in the wars!
With Number Three.

Put forth to watch, unschooled, alone,
'Twixt hostile earth and sky;

CHAPTER HEADINGS

The mottled lizard 'neath the stone
Is wiser here than I.

What stir across the haze of heat?
What omen down the wind?
The buck that break before my feet—
They know, but I am blind!

THE JUNGLE BOOKS

Now Chil the Kite brings home the night
That Mang the Bat sets free—
The herds are shut in byre and hut,
For loosed till dawn are we.
This is the hour of pride and power,
Talon and tush and claw.
Oh, hear the call!—Good hunting, all
That keep the Jungle Law!

Mowgli's Brothers.

His spots are the joy of the Leopard: his horns are the
Buffalo's pride.
Be clean, for the strength of the hunter is known by
the gloss of his hide.
If ye find that the Bullock can toss you, or the heavy-
browed Sambhur can gore,
Ye need not stop work to inform us. We knew it ten
seasons before.
Oppress not the cubs of the stranger, but hail them as
Sister and Brother,
For though they are little and fussy, it may be the
Bear is their mother.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

'There is none like to me!' says the Cub in the pride
of his earliest kill;
But the Jungle is large and the Cub he is small. Let
him think and be still.

Kaa's Hunting.

The stream is shrunk—the pool is dry,
And we be comrades, thou and I;
With fevered jowl and dusty flank
Each jostling each along the bank;
And, by one drouthy fear made still,
Forgoing thought of quest or kill.
Now 'neath his dam the fawn may see
The lean Pack-wolf as cowed as he,
And the tall buck, unflinching, note
The fangs that tore his father's throat.
*The pools are shrunk—the streams are dry,
And we be playmates, thou and I,
Till yonder cloud—Good Hunting!—loose
The rain that breaks our Water Truce.*

How Fear Came.

What of the hunting, hunter bold?
Brother, the watch was long and cold.
What of the quarry ye went to kill?
Brother, he crops in the jungle still.
Where is the power that made your pride?
Brother, it ebbs from my flank and side.
Where is the haste that ye hurry by?
Brother, I go to my lair to die!

'Tiger! Tiger!'

CHAPTER HEADINGS

Veil them, cover them, wall them round—
Blossom, and creeper, and weed—
Let us forget the sight and the sound,
The smell and the touch of the breed!
Fat black ash by the altar-stone,
Here is the white-foot rain,
And the does bring forth in the fields unsown,
And none shall affright them again;
And the blind walls crumble, unknown, o'erthrown,
And none shall inhabit again!

Letting in the Jungle.

These are the Four that are never content, that have
never been filled since the Dews began—
Jacala's mouth, and the glut of the Kite, and the hands
of the Ape, and the Eyes of Man.

The King's Ankus.

For our white and our excellent nights—for the nights
of swift running,
Fair ranging, far seeing, good hunting, sure cunning!
For the smells of the dawning, untainted, ere dew has
departed!
For the rush through the mist, and the quarry blind-
started!
For the cry of our mates when the sambhur has
wheeled and is standing at bay!
For the risk and the riot of night!
For the sleep at the lair-mouth by day!
It is met, and we go to the fight.
Bay! Oh, bay!

Red Dog.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

Man goes to Man! Cry the challenge through the
Jungle!

He that was our Brother goes away.

Hear, now, and judge, O ye People of the Jungle,—

Answer, who can turn him—who shall stay?

Man goes to Man! He is weeping in the Jungle:

He that was our Brother sorrows sore!

Man goes to Man! (Oh, we loved him in the Jungle!)

To the Man-Trail where we may not follow more.

The Spring Running.

At the hole where he went in

Red-Eye called to Wrinkle-Skin.

Hear what little Red-Eye saith:

‘Nag, come up and dance with Death!’

Eye to eye and head to head,

(Keep the measure, Nag.)

This shall end when one is dead;

(At thy pleasure, Nag.)

Turn for turn and twist for twist—

(Run and hide thee, Nag.)

Hah! The hooded Death has missed!

(Woe betide thee, Nag!)

‘Rikki-Tikki-Tavi.’

Oh! hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us,

And black are the waters that sparkled so green.

The moon, o’er the combers, looks downward to
find us

At rest in the hollows that rustle between.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

Where billow meets billow, there soft be thy pillow;
Ah, weary wee flipperling, curl at thy ease!
The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark overtake
thee,
Asleep in the arms of the slow-swinging seas.

The White Seal.

You mustn't swim till you're six weeks old,
Or your head will be sunk by your heels;
And summer gales and Killer Whales
Are bad for baby seals.
Are bad for baby seals, dear rat,
As bad as bad can be.
But splash and grow strong,
And you can't be wrong,
Child of the Open Sea!

The White Seal.

I will remember what I was. I am sick of rope and
chain—

I will remember my old strength and all my forest-
affairs.

I will not sell my back to man for a bundle of sugar-
cane.

I will go out to my own kind, and the wood-folk
in their lairs.

I will go out until the day, until the morning break,
Out to the winds' untainted kiss, the waters' clean
caress.

I will forget my ankle-ring and snap my picket-stake.
I will revisit my lost loves, and playmates masterless!

Toomai of the Elephants.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

The People of the Eastern Ice, they are melting like
the snow—

They beg for coffee and sugar; they go where the
white men go.

The People of the Western Ice, they learn to steal and
fight;

They sell their furs to the trading-post; they sell their
souls to the white.

The People of the Southern Ice, they trade with the
whaler's crew;

Their women have many ribbons, but their tents are
torn and few.

But the People of the Elder Ice, beyond the white
man's ken—

Their spears are made of the narwhal-horn, and they
are the last of the Men!

Quiquern.

When ye say to Tabaqui, 'My Brother!', when ye
call the Hyaena to meat,

Ye may cry the Full Truce with Jacala—the Belly that
runs on four feet.

The Undertakers.

The night we felt the earth would move
We stole and plucked him by the hand,
Because we loved him with the love
That knows but cannot understand.

And when the roaring hillside broke,
And all our world fell down in rain,
We saved him, we the Little Folk;
But lo! he does not come again!

CHAPTER HEADINGS

Mourn now, we saved him for the sake
Of such poor love as wild ones may.
Mourn ye! Our brother will not wake,
And his own kind drive us away!

The Miracle of Purun Bhagat.

'JUST SO' VERSES

WHEN the cabin port-holes are dark and green
Because of the sea's outside;
When the ship goes *wop* (with a wiggle between)
And the steward falls into the soup-tureen,
And the trunks begin to slide;
When Nursey lies on the floor in a heap,
And Mummy tells you to let her sleep,
And you aren't waked or washed or dressed,
Why, then you will know (if you haven't guessed)
You're 'Fifty North and Forty West!'

How the Whale got his Throat.

The Camel's hump is an ugly lump
Which well you may see at the Zoo;
But uglier yet is the Hump we get
From having too little to do.

Kiddies and grown-ups too-oo-oo,
If we haven't enough to do-oo-oo,
We get the Hump—
Cameelious Hump—
The Hump that is black and blue!

CHAPTER HEADINGS

We climb out of bed with a frouzly head
And a snarly-yarly voice.
We shiver and scowl and we grunt and we growl
At our bath and our boots and our toys;

And there ought to be a corner for me
(And I know there is one for you)
When we get the Hump—
Cameelious Hump—
The Hump that is black and blue!

The cure for this ill is not to sit still,
Or frowst with a book by the fire;
But to take a large hoe and a shovel also,
And dig till you gently perspire;

And then you will find that the sun and the wind,
And the Djinn of the Garden too,
Have lifted the Hump—
The horrible Hump—
The Hump that is black and blue!

I get it as well as you-oo-oo—
If I haven't enough to do-oo-oo!
We all get Hump—
Cameelious Hump—
Kiddies and grown-ups too!

How the Camel got his Hump.

I am the Most Wise Baviaan, saying in most wise
tones,
'Let us melt into the landscape—just us two by our
lones.'

CHAPTER HEADINGS

People have come—in a carriage—calling. But Mummy
is there. . . .

Yes, I can go if you take me—Nurse says *she* don't
care.

Let's go up to the pig-sties and sit on the farmyard
rails!

Let's say things to the bunnies, and watch 'em skitter
their tails!

Let's—oh, *anything*, Daddy, so long as it's you and
me,

And going truly exploring, and not being in till tea!
Here's your boots (I've brought 'em), and here's your
cap and stick,

And here's your pipe and tobacco. Oh, come along
out of it—*quick!*

How the Leopard got his spots.

I keep six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew),
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who.
I send them over land and sea,
I send them east and west;
But after they have worked for me,
I give them all a rest.

I let them rest from nine till five,
For I am busy then,
As well as breakfast, lunch, and tea,
For they are hungry men.
But different folk have different views.
I know a person small—

CHAPTER HEADINGS

She keeps ten million serving-men,
Who get no rest at all!

She sends 'em abroad on her own affairs,
From the second she opens her eyes—
One million Hows, two million Wheres,
And seven million Whys!

The Elephant's Child.

This is the mouth-filling song of the race that was run
by a Boomer.

Run in a single burst—only event of its kind—
Started by Big God Nqong from Warrigaborriga-
rooma,
Old Man Kangaroo first, Yellow-Dog Dingo behind.

Kangaroo bounded away, his back-legs working like
pistons—

Bounded from morning till dark, twenty-five feet at
a bound.

Yellow-Dog Dingo lay like a yellow cloud in the dis-
tance—

Much too busy to bark. My! but they covered the
ground!

Nobody knows where they went, or followed the
track that they flew in,

For that Continent hadn't been given a name.

They ran thirty degrees, from Torres Straits to the
Leeuwin

(Look at the Atlas, please), then they ran back as they
came.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

S'posing you could trot from Adelaide to the Pacific
For an afternoon's run—half what these gentlemen
did—

You would feel rather hot, but your legs would
develop terrific—

Yes, my importunate son, you'd be a Marvellous Kid!
The Sing-Song of Old Man Kangaroo.

I've never sailed the Amazon,
I've never reached Brazil;
But the *Don* and *Magdalena*,
They can go there when they will!

Yes, weekly from Southampto n,
Great steamers, white and gold,
Go rolling down to Rio
(Roll down—roll down to Rio!).
And I'd like to roll to Rio
Some day before I'm old!

I've never seen a Jaguar,
Nor yet an Armadill-
o dilloing in his armour,
And I s'pose I never will,

Unless I go to Rio
These wonders to behold—
Roll down—roll down to Rio—
Roll really down to Rio!
Oh, I'd love to roll to Rio
Some day before I'm old!
The Beginning of the Armadilloes.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

China-going P. & O.'s
Pass Pau Amma's playground close,
And his Pusat Tasek lies
Near the track of most B.I.'s.
N.Y.K. and N.D.L.
Know Pau Amma's home as well
As the Fisher of the Sea knows
'Bens,' M.M.'s, and Rubattinos.
But (and this is rather queer)
A.T.L.'s can *not* come here;
O. and O. and D.O.A.
Must go round another way.
Orient, Anchor, Bibby, Hall,
Never go that way at all.
U.C.S. would have a fit
If it found itself on it.
And if 'Beavers' took their cargoes
To Penang instead of Lagos,
Or a fat Shaw-Savill bore
Passengers to Singapore,
Or a White Star were to try a
Little trip to Sourabaya,
Or a B.S.A. went on
Past Natal to Cheribon,
Then great Mr. Lloyds would come
With a wire and drag them home!
.
You'll know what my riddle means
When you've eaten mangosteens.

The Crab that Played with the Sea.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

Pussy can sit by the fire and sing,
Pussy can climb a tree,
Or play with a silly old cork and string
To 'muse herself, not me.
But I like Binkie my dog, because
He knows how to behave;
So, Binkie's the same as the First Friend was,
And I am the Man in the Cave!

Pussy will play Man Friday till
It's time to wet her paw
And make her walk on the window-sill
(For the footprint Crusoe saw);
Then she fluffles her tail and mews,
And scratches and won't attend.
But Binkie will play whatever I choose,
And he is my true First Friend!

Pussy will rub my knees with her head
Pretending she loves me hard;
But the very minute I go to my bed
Pussy runs out in the yard,
And there she stays till the morning-light;
So I know it is only pretend.
But Binkie, he snores at my feet all night,
And he is my Firstest Friend!
The Cat that Walked by Himself.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

This Uninhabited Island
Is near Cape Gardafui;
But it's hot—too hot—off Suez
For the likes of you and me
Ever to go in a P. & O.
To call on the Cake Parsee.
How the Rhinoceros got his Skin.

There was never a Queen like Balkis,
From here to the wide world's end;
But Balkis talked to a butterfly
As you would talk to a friend.

There was never a King like Solomon,
Not since the world began;
But Solomon talked to a butterfly
As a man would talk to a man.

She was Queen of Sabaea—
And *he* was Asia's Lord—
But they both of 'em talked to butterflies
When they took their walks abroad!
The Butterfly that Stamped.

THE END

LATER SONGS FROM
BOOKS

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

FROM
'SEA WARFARE'
1916

THE LOWESTOFT BOAT

(EAST COAST PATROLS)

IN Lowestoft a boat was laid,
Mark well what I do say!
And she was built for the herring-trade,
But she has gone a-rovin', a-rovin', a-rovin',
The Lord knows where!

They gave her Government coal to burn,
And a Q.F. gun at bow and stern,
And sent her out a-rovin', etc.

Her skipper was mate of a bucko ship
Which always killed one man per trip,
So he is used to rovin', etc.

Her mate was skipper of a chapel in Wales,
And so he fights in topper and tails—
Religi-ous tho' rovin', etc.

Her engineer is fifty-eight,
So *he's* prepared to meet his fate,
Which ain't unlikely rovin', etc.

Her leading-stoker's seventeen,
So he don't know what the Judgments mean,
Unless he cops 'em rovin', etc.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Her cook was chef in the Lost Dogs' Home,
Mark well what I do say!
And I'm sorry for Fritz when they all come
A-rovin', a-rovin', a-roarin' and a-rovin',
Round the North Sea rovin',
The Lord knows where!

MINE SWEEPERS

MINE SWEEPERS

DAWN off the Foreland—the young flood making
Jumbled and short and steep—
Black in the hollows and bright where it's breaking—
Awkward water to sweep.
'Mines reported in the fairway,
Warn all traffic and detain.
'Sent up *Unity, Claribel, Assyrian, Stormcock, and Golden Gain.*

Noon off the Foreland— the first ebb making
Lumpy and strong in the bight.
Boom after boom, and the golf-hut shaking
And the jackdaws wild with fright!
'Mines located in the fairway,
Boats now working up the chain.
Sweepers—*Unity, Claribel, Assyrian, Stormcock, and Golden Gain.*

Dusk off the Foreland—the last light going
And the traffic crowding through,
And five damned trawlers with their syreens blowing
Heading the whole review!
'Sweep completed in the fairway.
No more mines remain.
'Sent back *Unity, Claribel, Assyrian, Stormcock, and Golden Gain.*

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

HARWICH LADIES

(1914-18)

FAREWELL and adieu to you, Harwich ladies,
Farewell and adieu to you, ladies ashore!
For we've received orders to work to the eastward
Where we hope in a short time to strafe 'em some
more.

We'll duck and we'll dive like little tin turtles,
We'll duck and we'll dive underneath the North Seas,
Until we strike something that doesn't expect us.
From here to Cuxhaven it's go as you please!

The first thing we did was to dock in a mine-field,
Which isn't a place where repairs should be done;
And there we lay doggo in twelve-fathom water
With tri-nitro-toluol hogging our run.

The next thing we did, we rose under a Zeppelin,
With his shiny big belly half blocking the sky.
But what in the—Heavens can you do with six-
pounders?
So we fired what we had and we bade him good-bye.
Farewell and adieu, etc.

‘TIN FISH’

‘TIN FISH’

THE ships destroy us above
And ensnare us beneath.
We arise, we lie down, and we move
In the belly of Death.

The ships have a thousand eyes
To mark where we come . . .
But the mirth of a seaport dies
When our blow gets home.

THE NORTH SEA PATROL

WHERE the East wind is brewed fresh and fresh every
morning,
And the balmy night-breezes blow straight from the
Pole,
I heard a Destroyer sing: 'What an enjoya-
ble life does one lead on the North Sea Patrol!

'To blow things to bits is our business (and Fritz's),
Which means there are mine-fields wherever we
stroll.
Unless you've particular wish to die quick, you'll a-
void steering close to the North Sea Patrol.

'We warn from disaster the mercantile master
Who takes in high Dudgeon our life-saving rôle,
For every one's grouching at Docking and Dowsing¹
The marks and the lights on the North Sea Patrol.'

[*Twelve verses omitted*]

So swept but surviving, half drowned but still driving,
I watched her head out through the swell off the
shoal,
And I heard her propellers roar: 'Write to poor fellers
Who run such a Hell as the North Sea Patrol!'

¹ Shoals and lights on the East Coast.

'THE TRADE'

'THE TRADE'

(SUBMARINES)

THEY bear, in place of classic names,
Letters and numbers on their skin.
They play their grisly blindfold games
In little boxes made of tin.
Sometimes they stalk the Zeppelin,
Sometimes they learn where mines are laid.
Or where the Baltic ice is thin.
That is the custom of 'The Trade.'

Few prize-courts sit upon their claims.
They seldom tow their targets in.
They follow certain secret aims
Down under, far from strife or din.
When they are ready to begin
No flag is flown, no fuss is made
More than the shearing of a pin.
That is the custom of 'The Trade.'

The Scout's quadruple funnel flames
A mark from Sweden to the Swin,
The Cruiser's thund'rous screw proclaims
Her comings out and goings in:
But only whiffs of paraffin
Or creamy rings that fizz and fade
Show where the one-eyed Death has been.
That is the custom of 'The Trade.'

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Their feats, their fortunes and their fames
Are hidden from their nearest kin;
No eager public backs or blames,
No journal prints the yarn they spin
(The Censor would not let it in!)
When they return from run or raid.
Unheard they work, unseen they win.
That is the custom of 'The Trade.'

SONGS WRITTEN FOR
C. R. L. FLETCHER'S
'A HISTORY OF ENGLAND'
1911

THE RIVER'S TALE

THE RIVER'S TALE

(PREHISTORIC)

*TWENTY bridges from Tower to Kew—
(Twenty bridges or twenty-two)—
Wanted to know what the River knew,
For they were young and the Thames was o d,
And this is the tale that the River told:—*

I walk my beat before London Town,
Five hours up and seven down.
Up I go till I end my run
At Tide-end-town, which is Teddington.
Down I come with the mud in my hands
And plaster it over the Maplin Sands.
But I'd have you know that these waters of mine
Were once a branch of the River Rhine,
When hundreds of miles to the East I went
And England was joined to the Continent.

I remember the bat-winged lizard-birds,
The Age of Ice and the Mammoth herds,
And the Giant Tigers that stalked them down
Through Regent's Park into Camden Town.
And I remember like yesterday
The earliest Cockney who came my way,
When he pushed through the forest that lined the
Strand,
With paint on his face and a club in his hand.
He was death to feather and fin and fur.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

He trapped my beavers at Westminster.
He netted my salmon, he hunted my deer,
He killed my heron off Lambeth Pier.
He fought his neighbour with axes and swords,
Flint or bronze, at my upper fords,
While down at Greenwich, for slaves and tin,
The tall Phoenician ships stole in,
And North Sea war-boats, painted and gay,
Flashed like dragon-flies, Erith way;
And Norseman, Negro and Gaul and Greek
Drank with the Britons in Barking Creek,
And life was gay, and the world was new,
And I was a mile across at Kew!
But the Roman came with a heavy hand,
And bridged and roaded and ruled the land,
And the Roman left and the Danes blew in—
And that's where your history-books begin!

THE ROMAN CENTURION'S SONG

THE ROMAN CENTURION'S SONG

(ROMAN OCCUPATION OF BRITAIN, A.D. 300)

LEGATE, I had the news last night—my cohort ordered
home

By ship to Portus Itius and thence by road to Rome.
I've marched the companies aboard, the arms are
stowed below:

Now let another take my sword. Command me not
to go!

I've served in Britain forty years, from Vectis to the
Wall.

I have none other home than this, nor any life at all.
Last night I did not understand, but, now the hour
draws near

That calls me to my native land, I feel that land is
here.

Here where men say my name was made, here where
my work was done;

Here where my dearest dead are laid—my wife—my
wife and son;

Here where time, custom, grief and toil, age, memory,
service, love,

Have rooted me in British soil. Ah, how can I remove?

For me this land, that sea, these airs, those folk and
fields suffice.

What purple Southern pomp can match our change-
ful Northern skies,

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Black with December snows unshed or pearled with
August haze—
The clanging arch of steel-grey March, or June's long-
lighted days?

You'll follow widening Rhodanus till vine and olive
lean
Aslant before the sunny breeze that sweeps Nemausus
clean
To Arelate's triple gate; but let me linger on,
Here where our stiff-necked British oaks confront
Euroclydon!

You'll take the old Aurelian Road through shore-
descending pines
Where, blue as any peacock's neck, the Tyrrhene
Ocean shines.
You'll go where laurel crowns are won, but—will you
e'er forget
The scent of hawthorn in the sun, or bracken in the wet?

Let me work here for Britain's sake—at any task you
will—
A marsh to drain, a road to make or native troops to
drill.
Some Western camp (I know the Pict) or granite
Border keep,
'Mid seas of heather derelict, where our old messmates
sleep.

Legate, I come to you in tears—My cohort ordered
home!

THE ROMAN CENTURION'S SONG

I've served in Britain forty years. What should I do in
Rome?

Here is my heart, my soul, my mind—the only life I
know.

I cannot leave it all behind. Command me not to go!

THE PIRATES IN ENGLAND

(SAXON INVASION, A.D. 400—600)

WHEN Rome was rotten-ripe to her fall,
And the sceptre passed from her hand,
The pestilent Picts leaped over the wall
To harry the English land.

The little dark men of the mountain and waste,
So quick to laughter and tears,
They came panting with hate and haste
For the loot of five hundred years.

They killed the trader, they sacked the shops,
They ruined temple and town—
They swept like wolves through the standing crops,
Crying that Rome was down.

They wiped out all that they could find
Of beauty and strength and worth,
But they could not wipe out the Viking's Wind
That brings the ships from the North.

They could not wipe out the North-East gales,
Nor what those gales set free—
The pirate ships with their close-reefed sails,
Leaping from sea to sea.

They had forgotten the shield-hung hull
Seen nearer and more plain,

THE PIRATES IN ENGLAND

Dipping into the troughs like a gull,
And gull-like rising again—

The painted eyes that glare and frown
In the high snake-headed stem,
Searching the beach while her sail comes down,
They had forgotten them!

There was no Count of the Saxon Shore
To meet her hand to hand,
As she took the beach with a grind and a roar,
And the pirates rushed inland!

DANE-GELD

(A.D. 980-1016)

It is always a temptation to an armed and agile nation
To call upon a neighbour and to say:—
'We invaded you last night—we are quite prepared
to fight,
Unless you pay us cash to go away.'

And that is called asking for Dane-geld,
And the people who ask it explain
That you've only to pay 'em the Dane-geld
And then you'll get rid of the Dane!

It is always a temptation to a rich and lazy nation
To puff and look important and to say:—
'Though we know we should defeat you, we have
not the time to meet you.
We will therefore pay you cash to go away.'

And that is called paying the Dane-geld;
But we've proved it again and again,
That if once you have paid him the Dane-geld
You never get rid of the Dane.

It is wrong to put temptation in the path of any nation,
For fear they should succumb and go astray;
So when you are requested to pay up or be molested,
You will find it better policy to say:—

DANE-GELD

'We never pay *any*-one Dane-geld,
No matter how trifling the cost;
For the end of that game is oppression and shame,
And the nation that plays it is lost!'

THE ANVIL

(NORMAN CONQUEST, 1066)

ENGLAND's on the anvil—hear the hammers ring—
Clanging from the Severn to the Tyne!
Never was a blacksmith like our Norman King—
England's being hammered, hammered,
hammered into line!

England's on the anvil! Heavy are the blows!
(But the work will be a marvel when it's done).
Little bits of Kingdoms cannot stand against their foes.
England's being hammered, hammered,
hammered into one!

There shall be one people—it shall serve one Lord—
(Neither Priest nor Baron shall escape!)
It shall have one speech and law, soul and strength and
sword.
England's being hammered, hammered,
hammered into shape!

NORMAN AND SAXON

(A.D. 1100)

‘My son,’ said the Norman Baron, ‘I am dying, and
you will be heir
To all the broad acres in England that William gave
me for my share
When we conquered the Saxon at Hastings, and a nice
little handful it is.
But before you go over to rule it I want you to under-
stand this:—

‘The Saxon is not like us Normans. His manner are
not so polite.
But he never means anything serious till he talks about
justice and right.
When he stands like an ox in the furrow with his sullen
set eyes on your own,
And grumbles, “This isn’t fair dealing,” my son, leave
the Saxon alone.

‘You can horsewhip your Gascony archers, or torture
your Picardy spears;
But don’t try that game on the Saxon; you’ll have the
whole brood round your ears.
From the richest old Thane in the county to the poor-
est chained serf in the field,
They’ll be at you and on you like hornets, and, if you
are wise, you will yield.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

'But first you must master their language, their dialect,
proverbs and songs.

Don't trust any clerk to interpret when they come
with the tale of their wrongs.

Let them know that you know what they're saying;
let them feel that you know what to say.

Yes, even when you want to go hunting, hear 'em out
if it takes you all day.

'They'll drink every hour of the daylight and poach
every hour of the dark.

It's the sport not the rabbits they're after (we've plenty
of game in the park).

Don't hang them or cut off their fingers. That's waste-
ful as well as unkind,

For a hard-bitten, South-country poacher makes the
best man-at-arms you can find.

'Appear with your wife and the children at their wed-
dings and funerals and feasts.

Be polite but not friendly to Bishops; be good to all
poor parish priests.

Say "we," "us" and "ours" when you're talking, in-
stead of "you fellows" and "I."

Don't ride over seeds; keep your temper; and *never*
you tell 'em a lie!

THE REEDS OF RUNNYMEDE

(MAGNA CHARTA, 15TH JUNE, 1215)

AT Runnymede, at Runnymede!

What say the reeds at Runnymede?
The lissom reeds that give and take,
That bend so far, but never break.
They keep the sleepy Thames awake
With tales of John at Runnymede.

At Runnymede, at Runnymede!

Oh, hear the reeds at Runnymede:—
'You mustn't sell, delay, deny,
A freeman's right or liberty,
It wakes the stubborn Englishry—
We saw 'em roused at Runnymede!

'When through our ranks the Barons came,
With little thought of praise or blame,
But resolute to play the game,

They lumbered up to Runnymede;
And there they launched in solid line
The first attack on Right Divine—
The curt, uncompromising "Sign!"
That settled John at Runnymede.

'At Runnymede, at Runnymede,
Your rights were won at Runnymede!
No freeman shall be fined or bound,
Or dispossessed of freehold ground,

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Except by lawful judgment found
And passed upon him by his peers!
Forget not, after all these years,
The Charter signed at Runnymede.'

And still when Mob or Monarch lays
Too rude a hand on English ways,
The whisper wakes, the shudder plays,
Across the reeds at Runnymede.
And Thames, that knows the moods of Kings,
And crowds and priests and suchlike things,
Rolls deep and dreadful as he brings
Their warning down from Runnymede!

MY FATHER'S CHAIR

MY FATHER'S CHAIR

(PARLIAMENTS OF HENRY III, 1265)

THERE are four good legs to my Father's Chair—
Priest and People and Lords and Crown.
I sits on all of 'em fair and square,
And that is the reason it don't break down.

I won't trust one leg, nor two, nor three,
To carry my weight when I sets me down.
I wants all four of 'em under me—
Priest and People and Lords and Crown.

I sits on all four and I favours none—
Priest, nor People, nor Lords, nor Crown:
And I never tilts in my Chair, my son,
And that is the reason it don't break down.

When your time comes to sit in my Chair,
Remember your Father's habits and rules.
Sit on all four legs, fair and square,
And never be tempted by one-legged stools!

THE DAWN WIND

(THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY)

AT two o'clock in the morning, if you open your
window and listen,
You will hear the feet of the Wind that is going to
call the sun.
And the trees in the shadow rustle and the trees in the
moonlight glisten,
And though it is deep, dark night, you feel that the
night is done.

So do the cows in the field. They graze for an hour
and lie down,
Dozing and chewing the cud; or a bird in the ivy
wakes,
Chirrup one note and is still, and the restless Wind
strays on,
Fidgeting far down the road, till, softly, the dark-
ness breaks.

Back comes the Wind full strength with a blow like
an angel's wing,
Gentle but waking the world, as he shouts: 'The
Sun! The Sun!'
And the light floods over the fields and the birds begin
to sing,
And the Wind dies down in the grass. It is day and
his work is done.

THE DAWN WIND

So when the world is asleep, and there seems no hope
of her waking
Out of some long, bad dream that makes her mutter
and moan,
Suddenly, all men arise to the noise of fetters breaking,
And every one smiles at his neighbour and tells him
his soul is his own !

THE KING'S JOB

(THE TUDOR MONARCHY)

ONCE on a time was a King anxious to understand
What was the wisest thing a man could do for his land.
Most of his population hurried to answer the question,
Each with a long oration, each with a new suggestion.
They interrupted his meals—he wasn't safe in his bed
from 'em—

They hung round his neck and heels, and at last His
Majesty fled from 'em.

He put on a leper's cloak (people leave lepers alone),
Out of the window he broke, and abdicated his throne.
All that rapturous day, while his Court and his Ministers
mourned him.

He danced on his own highway till his own Policemen
warned him,

Gay and cheerful he ran (lepers don't cheer as a rule)
Till he found a philosopher-man teaching an infant-school.

The windows were open wide, the King sat down on
the grass,

And heard the children inside reciting 'Our King is
an ass.'

The King popped in his head: 'Some people would
call this treason,

But I think you are right,' he said. 'Will you kindly
give me your reason?'

Lepers in school are as rare as Kings with a leper's
dress on,

THE KING'S JOB

But the class didn't stop or stare; it calmly went on with the lesson:—

'The wisest thing, we suppose, that a man can do for his land,

Is the work that lies under his nose, with the tools that lie under his hand.'

The King whipped off his cloak, and stood in his crown before 'em.

He said: 'My dear little folk, *Ex ore parvulorum*—
(Which is Latin for "Children know more than grown-ups would credit")

You have shown me the road to go, and I propose to tread it.'

Back to his Kingdom he ran, and issued a Proclamation,

'Let every living man return to his occupation!'

Then he explained to the mob that cheered in his palace and round it,

'I've been to look for a job, and Heaven be praised I have found it!'

WITH DRAKE IN THE TROPICS

(A.D. 1580)

SOUTH and far south below the Line,
Our Admiral leads us on,
Above, undreamed-of planets shine—
The stars we knew are gone.
Around, our clustered seamen mark
The silent deep ablaze
With fires, through which the far-down shark
Shoots glimmering on his ways.

The sultry tropic breezes fail
That plagued us all day through;
Like molten silver hangs our sail,
Our decks are dark with dew.
Now the rank moon commands the sky.
Ho! Bid the watch beware
And rouse all sleeping men that lie
Unsheltered in her glare.

How long the time 'twixt bell and bell!
How still our lanthorns burn!
How strange our whispered words that tell
Of England and return!
Old towns, old streets, old friends, old loves!
We name them each to each,
While the lit face of Heaven removes
Them farther from our reach.

WITH DRAKE IN THE TROPICS

Now is the utmost ebb of night
When mind and body sink,
And loneliness and gathering fright
O'erwhelm us, if we think—
Yet, look, where in his room apart,
All windows opened wide,
Our Admiral thrusts away the chart
And comes to walk outside.

Kindly, from man to man he goes,
With comfort, praise, or jest,
Quick to suspect our childish woes,
Our terror and unrest.
It is as though the sun should shine—
Our midnight fears are gone!
South and far south below the Line,
Our Admiral leads us on!

‘TOGETHER’

(ENGLAND AT WAR)

WHEN Horse and Rider each can trust the other every-
where,
It takes a fence and more than a fence to pound that
happy pair;
For the one will do what the other demands, although
he is beaten and blown,
And when it is done, they can live through a run that
neither could face alone.

When Crew and Captain understand each other to
the core,
It takes a gale and more than a gale to put their ship
ashore;
For the one will do what the other commands, al-
though they are chilled to the bone,
And both together can live through weather that
neither could face alone.

When King and People understand each other past a
doubt,
It takes a foe and more than a foe to knock that country
out;
For the one will do what the other requires as soon
as the need is shown;
And hand in hand they can make a stand which neither
could make alone!

‘TOGETHER’

This wisdom had Elizabeth and all her subjects too,
For she was theirs and they were hers, as well the
Spaniard knew;
For when his grim Armada came to conquer the
Nation and Throne,
Why, back to back they met an attack that neither
could face alone!

It is not wealth, nor talk, nor trade, nor schools, nor
even the Vote,
Will save your land when the enemy's hand is tighten-
ing round your throat.
But a King and a People who thoroughly trust each
other in all that is done
Can sleep on their bed without any dread—for the
world will leave 'em alone!

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

JAMES I

(1603–1625)

THE child of Mary Queen of Scots,
A shifty mother's shiftless son,
Bred up among intrigues and plots,
Learnèd in all things, wise in none.
Ungainly, babbling, wasteful, weak,
Shrewd, clever, cowardly, pedantic,
The sight of steel would blanch his cheek
The smell of baccy drive him frantic.
He was the author of his line—
He wrote that witches should be burnt;
He wrote that monarchs were divine,
And left a son who—proved they weren't!

EDGEHILL FIGHT

EDGEHILL FIGHT

(CIVIL WARS, 1642)

NAKED and grey the Cotswolds stand
Beneath the autumn sun,
And the stubble-fields on either hand
Where Stour and Avon run.
There is no change in the patient land
That has bred us every one.

She should have passed in cloud and fire
And saved us from this sin
Of war—red war—'twixt child and sire,
Household and kith and kin,
In the heart of a sleepy Midland shire,
With the harvest scarcely in.

But there is no change as we meet at last
On the brow-head or the plain,
And the raw, astonished ranks stand fast
To slay or to be slain
By the men they knew in the kindly past
That shall never come again—

By the men they met at dance or chase,
In the tavern or the hall,
At the justice-bench and the market-place,
At the cudgel-play or brawl—
Of their own blood and speech and race,
Comrades or neighbours all!

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

More bitter than death this day must prove
 Whichever way it go,
For the brothers of the maids we love
 Make ready to lay low
Their sisters' sweethearts, as we move
 Against our dearest foe.

Thank Heaven! At last the trumpets peal
 Before our strength gives way.
For King or for the Commonweal—
 No matter which they say,
The first dry rattle of new-drawn steel
 Changes the world to-day!

THE DUTCH IN THE MEDWAY

(1664-1672)

If wars were won by feasting,
Or victory by song,
Or safety found in sleeping sound,
How England would be strong!
But honour and dominion
Are not maintainèd so.
They're only got by sword and shot,
And this the Dutchmen know!

The moneys that should feed us
You spend on your delight,
How can you then have sailor-men
To aid you in your fight?
Our fish and cheese are rotten,
Which makes the scurvy grow—
We cannot serve you if we starve,
And this the Dutchmen know!

Our ships in every harbour
Be neither whole nor sound,
And, when we seek to mend a leak,
No oakum can be found;
Or, if it is, the caulkers,
And carpenters also,
For lack of pay have gone away,
And this the Dutchmen know!

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Mere powder, guns, and bullets,
We scarce can get at all;
Their price was spent in merriment
And revel at Whitehall,
While we in tattered doublets
From ship to ship must row,
Beseeching friends for odds and ends—
And this the Dutchmen know!

No King will heed our warnings,
No Court will pay our claims—
Our King and Court for their disport
Do sell the very Thames!
For, now De Ruyter's topsails
Off naked Chatham show,
We dare not meet him with our fleet—
And this the Dutchmen know!

‘BROWN BESS’

‘BROWN BESS’

(THE ARMY MUSKET—1700—1815)

IN the days of lace-ruffles, perukes and brocade
Brown Bess was a partner whom none could
despise—
An outspoken, flinty-lipped, brazen-faced jade,
With a habit of looking men straight in the eyes—
At Blenheim and Ramillies fops would confess
They were pierced to the heart by the charms of
Brown Bess.

Though her sight was not long and her weight was
not small,
Yet her actions were winning, her language was
clear;
And every one bowed as she opened the ball
On the arm of some high-gaitered, grim Grenadier.
Half Europe admitted the striking success
Of the dances and routs that were given by Brown Bess.

When ruffles were turned into stiff leather stocks,
And people wore pigtails instead of perukes,
Brown Bess never altered her iron-grey locks:
She knew she was valued for more than her looks.
‘Oh, powder and patches was always my dress,
And I think I am killing enough,’ said Brown Bess.

So she followed her red-coats, whatever they did,
From the heights of Quebec to the plains of Assaye,

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

From Gibraltar to Acre, Cape Town and Madrid,
And nothing about her was changed on the way;
(But most of the Empire which now we possess
Was won through those years by old-fashioned Brown
Bess.)

In stubborn retreat or in stately advance,
From the Portugal coast to the cork-woods of Spain,
She had puzzled some excellent Marshals of France
Till none of them wanted to meet her again:
But later, near Brussels, Napoleon—no less—
Arranged for a Waterloo ball with Brown Bess.

She had danced till the dawn of that terrible day—
She danced till the dusk of more terrible night,
And before her linked squares his battalions gave way,
And her long fierce quadrilles put his lancers to
flight:
And when his gilt carriage drove off in the press,
'I have danced my last dance for the world!' said Brown
Bess.

If you go to Museums—there's one in Whitehall—
Where old weapons are shown with their names
writ beneath,
You will find her, upstanding, her back to the wall,
As stiff as a ramrod, the flint in her teeth.
And if ever we English had reason to bless
Any arm save our mothers', that arm is Brown Bess!

THE AMERICAN REBELLION

THE AMERICAN REBELLION

(1776)

BEFORE

'Twas not while England's sword unsheathed
Put half a world to flight,
Nor while their new-built cities breathed
Secure behind her might;
Not while she poured from Pole to Line
Treasure and ships and men—
These worshippers at Freedom's shrine
They did not quit her then!

Not till their foes were driven forth
By England o'er the main—
Not till the Frenchmen from the North
Had gone with shattered Spain;
Not till the clean-swept oceans showed
No hostile flag unrolled,
Did they remember what they owed
To Freedom—and were bold!

AFTER

THE snow lies thick on Valley Forge,
The ice on the Delaware,
But the poor dead soldiers of King George
They neither know nor care.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Not though the earliest primrose break
On the sunny side of the lane,
And scuffling rookeries awake
Their England's spring again.

They will not stir when the drifts are gone
Or the ice melts out of the bay . . .
And the men that served with Washington
Lie all as still as they.

They will not stir though the mayflower blows
In the moist dark woods of pine,
And every rock-strewn pasture shows
Mullein and columbine.

Each for his land, in a fair fight,
Encountered, strove, and died,
And the kindly earth that knows no spite
Covers them side by side.

She is too busy to think of war;
She has all the world to make gay;
And, behold, the yearly flowers are
Where they were in our fathers' day!

Golden-rod by the pasture-wall
When the columbine is dead,
And sumach leaves that turn, in fall,
Bright as the blood they shed.

THE FRENCH WARS

THE FRENCH WARS

(NAPOLEONIC)

THE boats of Newhaven and Folkestone and Dover
To Dieppe and Boulogne and to Calais cross over;
And in each of those runs there is not a square yard
Where the English and French haven't fought and
fought hard!

If the ships that were sunk could be floated once more,
They'd stretch like a raft from the shore to the shore,
And we'd see, as we crossed, every pattern and plan
Of ship that was built since sea-fighting began.

There'd be biremes and brigantines, cutters and sloops,
Cogs, carracks and galleons with gay gilded poops—
Hoys, caravels, ketches, corvettes and the rest,
As thick as regattas, from Ramsgate to Brest.

But the galleys of Caesar, the squadrons of Sluys,
And Nelson's crack frigates are hid from our eyes,
Where the high Seventy-fours of Napoleon's days
Lie down with Deal luggers and French *chasse-marées*.

They'll answer no signal—they rest on the ooze,
With their honeycombed guns and their skeleton
crews—

And racing above them, through sunshine or gale,
The Cross-Channel packets come in with the Mail.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Then the poor sea-sick passengers, English and French,
Must open their trunks on the Custom-house bench,
While the officers rummage for smuggled cigars
And nobody thinks of our bloodthirsty wars!

BIG STEAMERS

BIG STEAMERS

'Oh, where are you going to, all you Big Steamers,
With England's own coal, up and down the salt
seas?'

'We are going to fetch you your bread and your
butter,
Your beef, pork, and mutton, eggs, apples, and
cheese.'

'And where will you fetch it from, all you Big
Steamers,

And where shall I write you when you are away?'

'We fetch it from Melbourne, Quebec, and Van-
couver—

Address us at Hobart, Hong Kong, and Boribay.'

'But if anything happened to all you Big Steamers,
And suppose you were wrecked up and down the
salt sea?'

'Then you'd have no coffee or bacon for breakfast, and
And you'd have no muffins or toast for your tea.'

'Then I'll pray for fine weather for all you Big
Steamers,

For little blue billows and breezes so soft.'

'Oh, billows and breezes don't bother Big Steamers,
For we're iron below and steel-rigging aloft.'

'Then I'll build a new lighthouse for all you Big
Steamers,

With plenty wise pilots to pilot you through.'

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

'Oh, the Channel's as bright as a ball-room already,
And pilots are thicker than pilchards at Looe.'

'Then what can I do for you, all you Big Steamers,
Oh, what can I do for your comfort and good?'
'Send out your big warships to watch your big waters,
That no one may stop us from bringing you food.

*'For the bread that you eat and the biscuits you nibble,
The sweets that you suck and the joints that you carve,
They are brought to you daily by all us Big Steamers—
And if any one hinders our coming you'll starve!'*

THE SECRET OF THE MACHINES

THE SECRET OF THE MACHINES

(MODERN MACHINERY)

WE were taken from the ore-bed and the mine,
We were melted in the furnace and the pit—
We were cast and wrought and hammered to design,
We were cut and filed and tooled and gauged to fit.
Some water, coal, and oil is all we ask,
And a thousandth of an inch to give us play:
And now, if you will set us to our task,
We will serve you four-and-twenty hours a day!

We can pull and haul and push and lift and drive,
We can print and plough and weave and heat and
light,
We can run and race and swim and fly and dive,
We can see and hear and count and read and
write!

Would you call a friend from half across the world?
If you'll let us have his name and town and state,
You shall see and hear your crackling question hurled
Across the arch of heaven while you wait.
Has he answered? Does he need you at his side?
You can start this very evening if you choose,
And take the Western Ocean in the stride
Of seventy thousand horses and some screws!

The boat-express is waiting your command!
You will find the *Mauretania* at the quay,

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Till her captain turns the lever 'neath his hand,
And the monstrous nine-decked city goes to sea.

Do you wish to make the mountains bare their head
And lay their new-cut forests at your feet?
Do you want to turn a river in its bed,
Or plant a barren wilderness with wheat?
Shall we pipe aloft and bring you water down
From the never-failing cisterns of the snows,
To work the mills and tramways in your town,
And irrigate your orchards as it flows?

It is easy! Give us dynamite and drills!
Watch the iron-shouldered rocks lie down and
quake,
As the thirsty desert-level floods and fills,
And the valley we have dammed becomes a lake.

But remember, please, the Law by which we live:
We are not built to comprehend a lie.
We can neither love nor pity nor forgive.
If you make a slip in handling us you die!
We are greater than the Peoples or the Kings—
Be humble, as you crawl beneath our rods!—
Our touch can alter all created things,
We are everything on earth—except The Gods!

*Though our smoke may hide the heavens from your
eyes,
It will vanish and the stars will shine again,
Because, for all our power and weight and size,
We are nothing more than children of your brain!*

THE BELLS AND QUEEN VICTORIA

1911

*'GAY go up and gay go down
To ring the Bells of London Town.'
When London Town's asleep in bed
You'll hear the Bells ring overhead.*

*In excelsis gloria!
Ringing for Victoria,
Ringing for their mighty mistress—ten years dead!*

THE BELLS:

Here is more gain than Gloriana guessed—
Than Gloriana guessed or Indies bring—
Than golden Indies bring. A Queen confessed—
A Queen confessed that crowned her people King.
Her people King, and crowned all Kings above,
Above all Kings have crowned their Queen their
love—
Have crowned their love their Queen, their Queen
their love!

Denying her, we do ourselves deny,
Disowning her, are we ourselves disowned.
Mirror was she of our fidelity,
And handmaid of our destiny enthroned;
The very marrow of Youth's dream, and still
Yoke-mate of wisest Age that worked her will!

Our fathers had declared to us her praise—
Her praise the years had proven past all speech.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

And past all speech our loyal hearts always,
Always our hearts lay open, each to each—
Therefore men gave the treasure of their blood
To this one woman—for she understood!

Four o' the clock! Now all the world is still.
Oh, London Bells, to all the world declare
- The Secret of the Empire—read who will!
The Glory of the People—touch who dare!

THE BELLS:

Power that has reached itself all kingly powers,
St. Margaret's: By love o'erpowered—
St. Martin's: By love o'erpowered—
St. Clement Danes: By love o'erpowered,
The greater power confers!

THE BELLS:

For we were hers, as she, as she was ours,
Bow Bells: And she was ours—
St. Paul's: And she was ours—
Westminster: And she was ours,
As we, even we, were hers!

THE BELLS:

As we were hers!

THE GLORY OF THE GARDEN

THE GLORY OF THE GARDEN

OUR England is a garden that is full of stately views,
Of borders, beds and shrubberies and lawns and
avenues,

With statues on the terraces and peacocks strutting by;
But the Glory of the Garden lies in more than meets
the eye.

For where the old thick laurels grow, along the twin
red wall,

You'll find the tool- and potting-sheds which are the
heart of all;

The cold-frames and the hot-houses, the dungpits and
the tanks,

The rollers, carts, and drain-pipes, with the barrows
and the planks.

And there you'll see the gardeners, the men and 'prentice boys

Told off to do as they are bid and do it without noise;
For, except when seeds are planted and we shout to
scare the birds,

The Glory of the Garden it abideth not in words.

And some can pot begonias and some can bud a rose,
And some are hardly fit to trust with anything that
grows;

But they can roll and trim the lawns and sift the sand
and loam,

For the Glory of the Garden occupieth all who come.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Our England is a garden, and such gardens are not
made
By singing:—‘Oh, how beautiful!’ and sitting in the
shade,
While better men than we go out and start their work-
ing lives
At grubbing weeds from gravel paths with broken
dinner-knives.

There’s not a pair of legs so thin, there’s not a head so
thick,
There’s not a hand so weak and white, nor yet a heart
so sick,
But it can find some needful job that’s crying to be
done,
For the Glory of the Garden glorifieth every one.

Then seek your job with thankfulness and work till
further orders,
If it’s only netting strawberries or killing slugs on
borders;
And when your back stops aching and your hands
begin to harden,
You will find yourself a partner in the Glory of the
Garden.

Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him
sees
That half a proper gardener’s work is done upon his
knees,

THE GLORY OF THE GARDEN

So when your work is finished, you can wash your
hands and pray

For the Glory of the Garden, that it may not pass
away!

And the Glory of the Garden it shall never pass away!

FROM
'A DIVERSITY OF CREATURES'
1917

MACDONOUGH'S SONG

MACDONOUGH'S SONG

AS EASY AS A.B.C.

WHETHER the State can loose and bind
In Heaven as well as on Earth:
If it be wiser to kill mankind
Before or after the birth—
These are matters of high concern
Where State-kept schoolmen are;
But Holy State (we have lived to learn)
Endeth in Holy War.

Whether The People be led by The Lord,
Or lured by the loudest throat:
If it be quicker to die by the Sword
Or cheaper to die by Vote—
These are things we have dealt with once
(And they will not rise from their grave)
For Holy People, however it runs,
Endeth in wholly Slave.

Whatsoever, for any cause,
Seeketh to take or give
Power above or beyond the Laws,
Suffer it not to live.
Holy State or Holy King—
Or Holy People's Will—
Have no truck with the senseless thing.
Order the guns and kill!
Saying—after—me:—

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

*Once there was The People—Terror gave it birth;
Once there was The People and it made a Hell of Earth.
Earth arose and crushed it. Listen, O ye slain!
Once there was The People—it shall never be again!*

THE LAND

THE LAND

FRIENDLY BROOK

WHEN Julius Fabricius, Sub-Prefect of the Weald,
In the days of Diocletian owned our Lower River-
field,
He called to him Hobdenius—a Briton of the Clay,
Saying: 'What about that River-piece for layin' in to
hay?'

And the aged Hobden answered: 'I remember as a lad
My father told your father that she wanted dreenin'
bad.
An' the more that you neglect her the less you'll get
her clean.
Hev it jest as you've a mind to, but, if I was you, I'd
dreen.'

So they drained it long and crossways in the lavish
Roman style.
Still we find among the river-drift their flakes of ancient
tile,
And in drouthy middle-August, when the bones of
meadows show,
We can trace the lines they followed sixteen hundred
years ago.

Then Julius Fabricius died as even Prefects do,
And after certain centuries Imperial Rome died too.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Then did robbers enter Britain from across the North-
ern main

And our Lower River-field was won by Ogier the
Dane.

Well could Ogier work his war-boat—well could
Ogier wield his brand—

Much he knew of foaming waters—not so much of
farming land.

So he called to him a Hobden of the old unaltered
blood,

Saying: 'What about that River-piece; she doesn't
look no good?'

And that aged Hobden answered: 'Tain't for *me* to
interfere,

But I've known that bit o' meadow now for five-and-
fifty year.

Hev it *jest* as you've a mind to, but I've proved it time
on time,

If you want to change her nature you have *got* to give
her lime!

Ogier sent his wains to Lewes, twenty hours' solemn
walk,

And drew back great abundance of the cool, grey, heal-
ing chalk.

And old Hobden spread it broadcast, never heeding
what was in't.—

Which is why, in cleaning ditches, now and then we
find a flint.

THE LAND

Ogier died. His sons grew English—Anglo-Saxon was
their name—

Till out of blossomed Normandy another pirate came;
For Duke William conquered England and divided
with his men,
And our Lower River-field he gave to William of
Warrenne.

But the Brook (you know her habit) rose one rainy
autumn night
And tore down sodden fitches of the bank to left and
right.
So, said William to his Bailiff as they rode their drip-
ping rounds:
'Hob, what about that River-bit—the Brook's got up
no bounds?'

And that aged Hobden answered: 'Tain't my business
to advise,
But ye might ha' known 'twould happen from the
way the valley lies.
When ye can't hold back the water you must try and
save the sile,
Hev it jest as you've a *mind* to, but, if I was you, I'd
spile!'

They spiled along the water-course with trunks of
willow-trees,
And planks of elms behind 'em and immortal oaken
knees.
And when the spates of autumn whirl the gravel-beds
away

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

You can see their faithful fragments iron-hard in iron
clay.

Georgii Quinti Anno Sexto, I, who own the River-field,
Am fortified with title-deeds, attested, signed and
sealed,

Guaranteeing me, my assigns, my executors and heirs
All sorts of powers and profits which—are neither mine
nor theirs.

I have rights of chase and warren, as my dignity
requires.

I can fish—but Hobden tickles. I can shoot—but Hobden
wires.

I repair, but he reopens, certain gaps which, men allege,
Have been used by every Hobden since a Hobden
swapped a hedge.

Shall I dog his morning progress o'er the track-betray-
ing dew?

Demand the dinner-basket into which my pheasant
flew?

Confiscate his evening faggot under which the conies
ran,

And summons him to judgment? I would sooner sum-
mons Pan.

His dead are in the churchyard—thirty generations
laid.

Their names were old in history when Domesday Book
was made;

THE LAND

And the passion and the piety and prowess of his line
Have seeded, rooted, fruited in some land the Law
calls mine.

Not for any beast that burrows, not for any bird that
flies,

Would I lose his large sound counsel, miss his keen
amending eyes.

He is bailiff, woodman, wheelwright, field-surveyor,
engineer,

And if flagrantly a poacher—'tain't for me to interfere.

'Hob, what about that River-bit?' I turn to him again,
With Fabricius and Ogier and William of Warrenne.
'Hev it jest as you've a mind to, *but*'—and here he takes
command.

For whoever pays the taxes old Mus' Hobden owns
the land!

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

‘HELEN ALL ALONE’

IN THE SAME BOAT

THERE was darkness under Heaven
For an hour's space—
Darkness that we knew was given
Us for special grace.
Sun and moon and stars were hid,
God had left his Throne,
When Helen came to me, she did,
Helen all alone!

Side by side (because our fate
Damned us ere our birth)
We stole out of Limbo Gate
Looking for the Earth.
Hand in pulling hand amid
Fear no dreams have known,
Helen ran with me, she did,
Helen all alone!

When the horror passing speech
Hunted us along,
Each laid hold on each, and each
Found the other strong.
In the teeth of Things forbid
And Reason overthrown,
Helen stood by me, she did,
Helen all alone!

‘HELEN ALL ALONE’

When, at last, we heard those Fires
Dull and die away,
When, at last, our linked desires
Dragged us up to day;
When, at last, our souls were rid
Of what that Night had shown,
Helen passed from me, she did,
Helen all alone!

Let her go and find a mate,
As I will find a bride,
Knowing naught of Limbo Gate
Or Who are penned inside.
There is knowledge God forbid
More than one should own.
So Helen went from me, she did,
Oh, my soul, be glad she did!
Helen all alone!

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE CHILDREN

THE HONOURS OF WAR

THESE were our children who died for our lands: they
were dear in our sight.

We have only the memory left of their home-treasured sayings and laughter.

The price of our loss shall be paid to our hands, not
another's hereafter.

Neither the Alien nor Priest shall decide on it. That is
our right.

But who shall return us the children?

At the hour the Barbarian chose to disclose his pretences,

And raged against Man, they engaged, on the breasts
that they bared for us,

The first felon-stroke of the sword he had long-time
prepared for us—

Their bodies were all our defence while we wrought
our defences.

They bought us anew with their blood, forbearing to
blame us,

Those hours which we had not made good when the
Judgment o'ercame us.

They believed us and perished for it. Our statecraft,
our learning

Delivered them bound to the Pit and alive to the burning

THE CHILDREN

Whither they mirthfully hastened as jostling for honour—

Not since her birth has our Earth seen such worth loosed upon her!

Nor was their agony brief, or once only imposed on them.

The wounded, the war-spent, the sick received no exemption:

Being cured they returned and endured and achieved our redemption,

Hopeless themselves of relief, till Death, marvelling, closed on them.

That flesh we had nursed from the first in all cleanness was given

To corruption unveiled and assailed by the malice of Heaven—

By the heart-shaking jests of Decay where it lolled on the wires—

To be blanched or gay-painted by fumes—to be cindered by fires—

To be senselessly tossed and retossed in stale mutilation

From crater to crater. For this we shall take expiation.

But who shall return us our children?

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE COMFORTERS

THE DOG HERVEY

UNTIL thy feet have trod the Road
Advise not wayside folk;
Nor till thy back has borne the Load
Break in upon the broke.

Chase not with undesired largesse
Of sympathy the heart
Which, knowing her own bitterness,
Presumes to dwell apart.

Employ not that glad hand to raise
The God-forgotten head
To Heaven and all the neighbours' gaze—
Cover thy mouth instead.

The quivering chin, the bitten lip,
The cold and sweating brow,
Later may yearn for fellowship—
Not now, you ass, not now!

Time, not thy ne'er so timely speech,
Life, not thy views thereon,
Shall furnish or deny to each
His consolation.

Or, if impelled to interfere,
Exhort, uplift, advise,

THE COMFORTERS

Lend not a base, betraying ear
To all the victim's cries.

Only the Lord can understand,
When those first pangs begin,
How much is reflex action and
How much is really sin.

E'en from good words thyself refrain,
And tremblingly admit
There is no anodyne for pain
Except the shock of it.

So, when thine own dark hour shall fall,
Unchallenged thou canst say:
'I never worried *you* at all,
For God's sake go away!'

THE PRESS

THE VILLAGE THAT VOTED THE EARTH WAS FLAT

THE Soldier may forget his Sword,
The Sailorman the Sea,
The Mason may forget the Word,
And the Priest his Litany:
The Maid may forget both jewel and gem,
And the Bride her wedding-dress—
But the Jew shall forget Jerusalem
Ere we forget the Press!

Who once hath stood through the loaded hour
Ere, roaring like the gale,
The Harrild and the Hoe devour
Their league-long paper-bale,
And has lit his pipe in the morning calm
That follows the midnight stress—
He hath sold his heart to the old Black Art
We call the daily Press.

Who once hath dealt in the widest game
That all of a man can play,
No later love, no larger fame
Will lure him long away.
As the war-horse snuffeth the battle afar,
The entered Soul, no less,
He saith: 'Ha! Ha!' where the trumpets are
And the thunders of the Press!

THE PRESS

Canst thou number the days that we fulfil,
Or the *Times* that we bring forth?
Canst thou send the lightnings to do thy will,
And cause them reign on earth?
Hast thou given a peacock goodly wings
To please his foolishness?
Sit down at the heart of men and things,
Companion of the Press!

The Pope may launch his Interdict,
The Union its decree,
But the bubble is blown and the bubble is pricked
By Us and such as We.
Remember the battle and stand aside
While Thrones and Powers confess
That King over all the Children of Pride
Is the Press—the Press—the Press!

JOBSON'S AMEN

IN THE PRESENCE

'BLESSÈD be the English and all their ways and works.
Cursèd be the Infidels, Hereticks, and Turks!'
'Amen,' quo' Jobson, 'but where I used to lie
Was neither Candle, Bell nor Book to curse my brethren by:

'But a palm-tree in full bearing, bowing down, bowing down,
To a surf that drove unsparing at the brown, walled town—
Conches in a temple, oil-lamps in a dome—
And a low moon out of Africa said: "This way home!"'

'Blessèd be the English and all that they profess.
Cursèd be the Savages that prance in nakedness!'
'Amen,' quo' Jobson, 'but where I used to lie
Was neither shirt nor pantaloons to catch my brethren by:

'But a well-wheel slowly creaking, going round, going round,
By a water-channel leaking over drowned, warm ground—
Parrots very busy in the trellised pepper-vine—
And a high sun over Asia shouting: "Rise and shine!"'

'Blessèd be the English and everything they own.
Cursèd be the Infidels that bow to wood and stone!'

JOBSON'S AMEN

'Amen,' quo' Jobson, 'but where I used to lie
Was neither pew nor Gospelleer to save my brethren
by:

'But a desert stretched and stricken, left and right, left
and right,
Where the piled mirages thicken under white-hot
light—
A skull beneath a sand-hill and a viper coiled inside—
And a red wind out of Libya roaring: "Run and hide!"'

'Blessèd be the English and all they make or do.
Cursèd be the Hereticks who doubt that this is true!
'Amen,' quo' Jobson, 'but where I mean to die
Is neither rule nor calliper to judge the matter by: ✓

'But Himàlya heavenward-heading, sheer and vast,
sheer and vast,
In a million summits bedding on the last world's past—
A certain sacred mountain where the scented cedars
climb,
And—the feet of my Belovèd hurrying back through
Time!'

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

A TRANSLATION

HORACE, Book V, Ode 3

REGULUS¹

THERE are whose study is of smells,
And to attentive schools rehearse
How something mixed with something else
Makes something worse.

Some cultivate in broths impure
The clients of our body—these,
Increasing without Venus, cure,
Or cause, disease.

Others the heated wheel extol,
And all its offspring, whose concern
Is how to make it farthest roll
And fastest turn.

Me, much incurious if the hour
Present, or to be paid for, brings
Me to Brundisium by the power
Of wheels or wings;

Me, in whose breast no flame hath burned
Life-long, save that by Pindar lit,
Such lore leaves cold. I am not turned
Aside to it

¹ In the Sussex Edition this story appears in Vol. XVII, *Stalky & Co.*

A TRANSLATION

More than when, sunk in thought profound
Of what the unaltering Gods require,
My steward (friend *but* slave) brings round
Logs for my fire.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

REBIRTH

(1914-18)

THE EDGE OF THE EVENING

If any God should say,
 'I will restore
The world her yesterday
 Whole as before
My Judgments blasted it'—who would not lift
Heart, eye, and hand in passion o'er the gift?

If any God should will
 To wipe from mind
The memory of this ill
 Which is mankind
In soul and substance now—who would not bless
Even to tears His loving-tenderness?

If any God should give
 Us leave to fly
These present deaths we live,
 And safely die
In those lost lives we lived ere we were born—
What man but would not laugh the excuse to scorn?

For we are what we are—
 So broke to blood
And the strict works of war—
 So long subdued

REBIRTH

To sacrifice, that threadbare Death commands
Hardly observance at our busier hands.

Yet we were what we were,
And, fashioned so,
It pleases us to stare
At the far show
Of unbelievable years and shapes that flit,
In our own likeness, on the edge of it.

THE LEGEND OF MIRTH

THE HORSE MARINES

THE Four Archangels, so the legends tell—
Raphael, Gabriel, Michael, Azrael—
Being first of those to whom the Power was shown,
Stood first of all the Host before The Throne,
And, when the Charges were allotted, burst
Tumultuous-winged from out the assembly first.
Zeal was their spur that bade them strictly heed
Their own high judgment on their lightest deed.
Zeal was their spur that, when relief was given,
Urged them unwearied to new toils in Heaven;
For Honour's sake perfecting every task
Beyond what e'en Perfection's self could ask. . . .
And Allah, Who created Zeal and Pride,
Knows how the twain are perilous-near allied.

It chanced on one of Heaven's long-lighted days,
The Four and all the Host being gone their ways
Each to his Charge, the shining Courts were void
Save for one Seraph whom no charge employed,
With folden wings and slumber-threatened brow,
To whom The Word: 'Belovèd, what dost thou?'
'By the Permission,' came the answer soft,
'Little I do nor do that little oft.
As is The Will in Heaven so on Earth
Where, by The Will, I strive to make men mirth.'
He ceased and sped, hearing The Word once more:
'Belovèd, go thy way and greet the Four.'

THE LEGEND OF MIRTH

Systems and Universes overpast,
The Seraph came upon the Four, at last,
Guiding and guarding with devoted mind
The tedious generations of mankind
Who lent at most unwilling ear and eye
When they could not escape the ministry. . . .
Yet, patient, faithful, firm, persistent, just
Toward all that gross, indifferent, facile dust,
The Archangels laboured to discharge their trust
By precept and example, prayer and law,
Advice, reproof, and rule; but, labouring, saw
Each in his fellow's countenance confessed,
The Doubt that sickens: 'Have I done my best?'

Even as they sighed and turned to toil anew,
The Seraph hailed them with observance due:
And, after some fit talk of higher things,
Touched tentative on mundane happenings.
This they permitting, he, emboldened thus,
Prolused of humankind promiscuous.
And, since the large contention less avails
Than instances observed, he told them tales—
Tales of the shop, the bed, the court, the street,[^]
Intimate, elemental, indiscreet:
Occasion where Confusion smiting swift
Piles jest on jest as snow-slides pile the drift
Whence, one by one, beneath deriding skies,
The victims' bare, bewildered heads arise—
Tales of the passing of the spirit, graced
With humour blinding as the doom it faced—
Stark tales of ribaldry that broke aside
To tears, by laughter swallowed ere they dried—

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Tales to which neither grace nor gain accrue,
But only (Allah be exalted!) true.
And only, as the Seraph showed that night,
Delighting to the limits of delight.

These he rehearsed with artful pause and halt,
And such pretence of memory at fault.
That soon the Four—so well the bait was thrown—
Came to his aid with memories of their own—
Matters dismissed long since as small or vain,
Whereof the high significance had lain
Hid, till the ungirt glosses made it plain.
Then, as enlightenment came broad and fast,
Each marvelled at his own oblivious past,
Until—the Gates of Laughter opened wide—
The Four, with that bland Seraph at their side,
While they recalled, compared, and amplified,
In utter mirth forgot both Zeal and Pride!

High over Heaven the Lamps of Midnight burned
Ere, weak with merriment, the Four returned,
Not in that order they were wont to keep—
Pinion to pinion answering, sweep for sweep,
In awful diapason heard afar—
But shoutingly adrift 'twixt star and star;
Reeling a planet's orbit left or right
As laughter took them in the abysmal Night;
Or, by the point of some remembered jest,
Winged and brought helpless down through gulfs
 unguessed,
Where the blank worlds that gather to the birth
Leaped in the Womb of Darkness at their mirth,

THE LEGEND OF MIRTH

And e'en Gehenna's bondsmen understood
They were not damned from human brotherhood. . . .

Not first nor last of Heaven's high Host, the Four
That night took place beneath The Throne once more.
Oh, lovelier than their morning majesty,
The understanding light behind the eye!
Oh, more compelling than their old command,
The new-learned friendly gesture of the hand!
Oh, sweeter than their zealous fellowship,
The wise half-smile that passed from lip to lip!
Oh, well and roundly, when Command was gi'en,
They told the tale agaunst themselves to Heaven
And in the silence, waiting on The Word,
Received the Peace and Pardon of The Lord!

THE FLOODS

‘MY SON’S WIFE’

THE rain it rains without a stay
In the hills above us, in the hills;
And presently the floods break way
Whose strength is in the hills.
The trees they suck from every cloud,
The valley brooks they roar aloud—
Bank-high for the lowlands, lowlands,
Lowlands under the hills!

The first wood down is sere and small,
From the hills—the brishings off the hills;
And then come by the bats and all
We cut last year in the hills;
And then the roots we tried to cleave
But found too tough and had to leave—
Polting down through the lowlands, lowlands,
Lowlands under the hills!

The eye shall look, the ear shall hark
To the hills, the doings in the hills;
And rivers mating in the dark
With tokens from the hills.
Now what is weak will surely go,
And what is strong must prove it so—
Stand fast in the lowlands, lowlands,
Lowlands under the hills!

THE FLOODS

The floods they shall not be afraid—
Nor the hills above 'em, nor the hills—
Of any fence which man has made
Betwixt him and the hills.
The waters shall not reckon twice
For any work of man's device,
But bid it down to the lowlands, lowlands,
Lowlands under the hills!

The floods shall sweep corruption clean—
By the hills, the blessing of the hills—
That more the meadows may be green,
New-mended from the hills.
The crops and cattle shall increase,
Nor little children shall not cease.
Go—plough the lowlands, lowlands,
Lowlands under the hills!

THE FABULISTS

THE VORTEX

WHEN all the world would keep a matter hid,
Since Truth is seldom friend to any crowd,
Men write in fable, as old Aesop did,
Jesting at that which none will name aloud.
And this they needs must do, or it will fall
Unless they please they are not heard at all.

When desperate Folly daily laboureth
To work confusion upon all we have,
When diligent Sloth demandeth Freedom's death,
And banded Fear commandeth Honour's grave—
Even in that certain hour before the fall,
Unless men please they are not heard at all.

Needs must all please, yet some not all for need,
Needs must all toil, yet some not all for gain;
But that men, taking pleasure, may take heed,
Whom present toil shall snatch from later pain.
Thus some have toiled, but their reward was small,
Since, though they pleased, they were not heard at all.

This was the lock that lay upon our lips,
This was the yoke that we have undergone,
Denying us all pleasant fellowships
As in our time and generation.
Our pleasures unpursued age past recall,
And for our pains—we are not heard at all.

THE FABULISTS

What man hears aught except the groaning guns?

What man heeds aught save what each instant
brings?

When each man's life all imaged life outruns,

What man shall pleasure in imaginings?

So it hath fallen, as it was bound to fall,

We are not, nor we were not, heard at all!

THE SONG OF SEVEN CITIES

THE VORTEX

I WAS Lord of Cities very sumptuously builded.
Seven roaring Cities paid me tribute from afar.
Ivory their outposts were—the guard-rooms of them
 gilded,
And garrisoned with Amazons invincible in war.

All the world went softly when it walked before my
 Cities—
Neither King nor Army vexed my peoples at their
 toil.
Never horse nor chariot irked or overbore my Cities.
Never Mob nor Ruler questioned whence they drew
 their spoil.

Banded, mailed and arrogant from sunrise unto sunset,
Singing while they sacked it, they possessed the land
 at large.
Yet when men would rob them, they resisted, they
 made onset
And pierced the smoke of battle with a thousand-sabred
 charge!

So they warred and trafficked only yesterday, my
 Cities.
To-day there is no mark or mound of where my Cities
 stood.

THE SONG OF SEVEN CITIES

For the River rose at midnight and it washed away my
Cities.

They are evened with Atlantis and the towns before
the Flood.

Rain on rain-gorged channels raised the water-levels
round them,
Freshet backed on freshet swelled and swept their world
from sight;
Till the emboldened floods linked arms and, flashing
forward, drowned them—
Drowned my Seven Cities and their peoples in one
night!

Low among the alders lie their derelict foundations,
The beams wherein they trusted and the plinths where-
on they built—
My rulers and their treasure and their unborn popula-
tions,
Dead, destroyed, aborted, and defiled with mud and
silt!

The Daughters of the Palace whom they cherished in
my Cities,
My silver-tongued Princesses, and the promise of their
May—
Their bridegrooms of the June-tide—all have perished
in my Cities,
With the harsh envenomed virgins that can neither
love nor play.

I was Lord of Cities—I will build anew my Cities,
Seven, set on rocks, above the wrath of any flood.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Nor will I rest from search till I have filled anew my
Cities
With peoples undefeated of the dark, enduring blood.

To the sound of trumpets shall their seed restore my
Cities,
Wealthy and well-weaponed, that once more may I
behold
All the world go softly when it walks before my
Cities,
And the horses and the chariots fleeing from them as
of old!

THE BEGINNINGS

THE BEGINNINGS

MARY POSTGATE

It was not part of their blood,
It came to them very late
With long arrears to make good,
When the English began to hate.

They were not easily moved,
They were icy-willing to wait
Till every count should be proved,
Ere the English began to hate.

Their voices were even and low,
Their eyes were level and straight.
There was neither sign nor show,
When the English began to hate.

It was not preached to the crowd,
It was not taught by the State.
No man spoke it aloud,
When the English began to hate.

It was not suddenly bred,
It will not swiftly abate,
Through the chill years ahead,
When Time shall count from the date
That the English began to hate.

FROM
'LAND AND SEA TALES'

1923

PREFACE

PREFACE

To all to whom this little book may come—
Health for yourselves and those you hold most
dear!

Content abroad, and happiness at home,
And—one grand Secret in your private ear:—
*Nations have passed away and left no traces,
And History gives the naked cause of it—
One single, simple reason in all cases;
They fell because their peoples were not fit.*

Now, though your Body be mis-shapen, blind,
Lame, feverish, lacking substance, power or skill,
Certain it is that men can school the Mind
To school the sickliest Body to her will—
As many have done, whose glory blazes still
Like mighty flames in meanest lanterns lit:
Wherefore, we pray the crippled, weak and ill—
Be fit—be fit! In mind at first be fit!

And, though your Spirit seem uncouth or small,
Stubborn as clay or shifting as the sand,
Strengthen the Body, and the Body shall
Strengthen the Spirit till she take command;
As a bold rider brings his horse in hand
At the tall fence, with voice and heel and bit,
And leaps while all the field are at a stand.
Be fit—be fit! In body next be fit!

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

*Nothing on earth—no Arts, no Gifts, nor Graces—
No Fame, no Wealth—outweighs the want of it.
✓ This is the Law which every law embraces—
Be fit—be fit! In mind and body be fit!*

The even heart that seldom slurs its beat—
The cool head weighing what that heart desires—
The measuring eye that guides the hands and feet—
The Soul unbroken when the Body tires—
These are the things our weary world requires
Far more than superfluities of wit;
Wherefore we pray you, sons of generous sires,
Be fit—be fit! For Honour's sake be fit.

*There is one lesson at all Times and Places—
One changeless Truth on all things changing writ,
For boys and girls, men, women, nations, races—
Be fit—be fit! And once again, be fit!*

THE JUNK AND THE DHOW

THE JUNK AND THE DHOW

AN UNQUALIFIED PILOT

ONCE a pair of savages found a stranded tree.

(One-piecee stick-pidgin—two-piecee man.

Straddle-um—paddle-um—push-um off to sea.

That way Foleign Debbil-boat began.)

But before, and before, and ever so long before

Any shape of sailing-craft was known,

The Junk and the Dhow had a stern and a bow,

And a mast and a sail of their own—ahoy! al me!

As they crashed across the Oceans on their own!

Once there was a pirate-ship, being blown ashore—

(Plitty soon pilum up, s'posee no can tack!

Seven-piecee stlong man pullum sta'boa'd oar.

That way bling her head aloud and sail-o back.)

But before, and before, and ever so long before

Grand Commander Noah took the wheel,

The Junk and the Dhow, though they look like anyhow,

Had rudders reaching deep below their keel—ahoy!
akeel!

As they laid the Eastern Seas beneath their keel!

Once there was a galliot yawing in a tide.

(Too much foollee side-slip. How can stop?

Man catchee tea-box lid—lasha longaside.

That way make her plenty glip and sail first-chop.)

But before, and before, and ever so long before

Any such contrivances were used,

The whole Confucian sea-board had standardised the
lee-board,

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

And hauled it up or dropped it as they choosed—
or chose—or chused!

According to the weather, when they cruised!

Once there was a caravel in a beam-sea roll—

(Ca'go shiftee—allla dliftee—no can livee long!

S'posum nail-o boa'd acloss—makee ploper hol'?

That way, ca'go sittum still, an' ship mo' stlong.)

But before, and before, and ever so long before

Any square-rigged vessel hove in sight,

The Canton deep-sea craft carried bulkheads fore and
aft,

And took good care to keep 'em water-tight—atite—
atite!

From Amboyna to the Great Australian Bight!

Once there was a sailor-man singing just this way—

(Too muchee yowl-o, sickum best flend!

Singee all-same pullee lope—haul and belay!

Hully up and coilum down an'—bite off end!)

But before, and before, and ever so long before

Any sort of chanty crossed our lips,

The Junk and the Dhow, though they look like anyhow,

Were the Mother and the Father of all Ships—ahoy!

—a' ships!

And of half the new inventions in our Ships!

From Tarifa to Formosa in our Ships!

From Socotra to Selankhor, of the windlass and
the anchor,

And the Navigator's Compass in our Ships—ahoy!

—our Ships!

(Oh, hully up and coilum down an'—bite—off—end!)

THE MASTER-COOK

HIS GIFT

WITH us there rade a Maister-Cook that came
 From the Rochelle which is neere Angoulême.
 Littel hee was, but rounder than a topp,
 And his small berd hadde dipped in manie a sopp.
 His honde was smother than beseemeth man's,
 And his discourse was all of marzipans,¹
 Of tripes of Caen, or Burdeux snailés swote,²
 And Seinte Menhoulde wher cooken piggés-fote.³
 To Thoulouse and to Bress and Carcasson
 For pyes and fowles and chesnottes hadde hee wonne;⁴
 Of hammés of Thuringie ⁵ colde hee prate,
 And well hee knew what Princes hadde on plate
 At Christmas-tide, from Artois to Gascogne.

Lordinges, quod hee, manne liveth nat alone
 By bred, but meatés rost and seethed, and broth,
 And purchasable ⁶ deinties, on mine othe.
 Honey and hote gingere well liketh hee,
 And whalés-flesch mortred ⁷ with spicerie.
 For, lat be all how man denie or carpe,⁸

¹ A kind of sticky sweetmeat.

² Bordeaux snails are specially large and sweet.

³ They grill pigs'-feet still at St. Menhoulde, not far from Verdun, better than anywhere else in all the world.

⁴ Gone—to get pâtés of ducks' liver at Toulouse; fatted poultry at Bourg in Bresse, on the road to Geneva; and very large chestnuts in sugar at Carcassonne, about forty miles from Toulouse.

⁵ This would probably be some sort of wild-boar ham from Germany.

⁶ Expensive.

⁷ Beaten up.

⁸ Sneer or despise.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Him thrives a daie his hunger maketh sharpe,
 And setteth him at boorde ¹ with hawkés eyne,
 Snuffing what dish is set beforne to deyne,
 Nor, till with meate hee all-to-fill to brim,
 None other matter nowher mooveth him.
 Lat holie Seintés sterve ² as bookés boast,
 Most mannés soule is in his bellie most.
 For, as man thinketh in his hearte is hee,
 But, as hee eateth so his thought shall bee.
 And Holie Fader's self ³ (with reveraunce)
 Oweth to Cooke his port and his presaunce.
 Wherbye it cometh past disputison ⁴
 Cookes over alle men have dominion,
 Which follow them as schippe her gouvernail.⁵
 Enoff of wordes—beginneth heere my tale:—

¹ Brings him to table.

² Starve.

³ The Pope himself, who depends on his cook for being healthy and well-fed.

⁴ Dispute or argument.

⁵ Men are influenced by their cooks as ships are steered by their rudders.

THE HOUR OF THE ANGEL¹

‘STALKY’²

SOONER or late—in earnest or in jest—
 (But the stakes are no jest) Ithuriel's Hour
Will spring on us, for the first time, the test
 Of our sole unbacked competence and power
Up to the limit of our years and dower
Of judgment—or beyond. But here we have
Prepared long since our garland or our grave.
 For, at that hour, the sum of all our past,
 Act, habit, thought, and passion, shall be cast
In one addition, be it more or less,
And as that reading runs so shall we do;
 Meeting, astounded, victory at the last,
 Or, first and last, our own unworthiness.
And none can change us though they die to save!

¹ Ithuriel was that Archangel whose spear had the magic property of showing every one exactly and truthfully what he was.

² In the Sussex Edition this story appears in Vol. XVII, *Stalky & Co.*

THE LAST LAP

THE BURNING OF THE SARAH SANDS

How do we know, by the bank-high river,
Where the mired and sulky oxen wait,
And it looks as though we might wait for ever,
How do we know that the floods abate?
There is no change in the current's brawling—
Louder and harsher the freshet scolds;
Yet we can feel she is falling, falling,
And the more she threatens the less she holds.
Down to the drift, with no word spoken, *1624*
The wheel-chained wagons slither and slue
Achtung! The back of the worst is broken! *16*
And—lash your leaders!—we're through—we're
through!

How do we know, when the port-fog holds us
Moored and helpless, a mile from the pier,
And the week-long summer smother enfolds us—
How do we know it is going to clear?
There is no break in the blindfold weather,
But, one and another, about the bay,
The unseen capstans clink together,
Getting ready to up and away.
A pennon whimpers—the breeze has found us—
A headsail jumps through the thinning haze.
The whole hull follows, till—broad around us—
The clean-swept ocean says: 'Go your ways!'

THE LAST LAP

How do we know, when the long fight rages,
On the old, stale front that we cannot shake,
And it looks as though we were locked for ages,
How do we know they are going to break?
There is no lull in the level firing,
Nothing has shifted except the sun;
Yet we can feel they are tiring, tiring—
Yet we can tell they are ripe to run.
Something wavers, and, while we wonder,
Their centre-trenches are emptying out,
And, before their useless flanks go under,
Our guns have pounded retreat to rout!

A DEPARTURE

THE PARABLE OF BOY JONES

SINCE first the White Horse Banner blew free,
By Hengist's horde unfurled,
Nothing has changed on land and sea
Of the things that steer the world.
(As it was when the long-ships scudded through
the gale,
So it is where the Liners go.)
Time and Tide, they are both in a tale:—
'Woe to the weaker—woe!'

No charm can bridle the hard-mouthed wind
Or smooth the fretting swell.
No gift can alter the grey Sea's mind,
But she serves the strong man well.
(As it is when her uttermost deeps are stirred,
So it is where the quicksands show.)
All the waters have but one word:—
'Woe to the weaker—woe!'

The feast is ended, the tales are told,
The dawn is overdue,
And we meet on the quay in the whistling cold
Where the galley waits her crew.
Out with the torches, they have flared too long,
And bid the harpers go.
Wind and warfare have but one song:—
'Woe to the weaker—woe!'

A DEPARTURE

Hail to the great oars gathering way,
As the beach begins to slide!
Hail to the war-shields' click and play,
As they lift along our side!
Hail to the first green over the bow—
Slow for the sea-stroke! Slow!—
All the benches are grunting now:—
'Woe to the weaker—woe!'

THE NURSES

THE BOLD 'PRENTICE

WHEN, with a pain he desires to explain to his servitors,
 Baby
Howls himself black in the face, toothlessly striving
 to curse;
And the six-months-old Mother begins to enquire of
 the Gods if it may be
Tummy, or Temper, or Pins—what does the adequate
 Nurse?

See! At a glance and a touch his trouble is guessed;
 and, thereafter,
She juggles (unscared by his throes) with drops of hot
 water and spoons,
Till the hiccoughs are broken by smiles, and the smiles
 pucker up into laughter,
And he lies o'er her shoulder and crows, and she, as
 she nurses him, croons! . . .

When, at the head of the grade, tumultuous out of
 the cutting
Pours the belated Express, roars at the night, and draws
 clear,
Redly obscured or displayed by her fire-door's open-
 ing and shutting—
Symbol of strength under stress—what does her small
 engineer?

THE NURSES

Clamour and darkness encircle his way. Do they deafen
or blind him?

No!—nor the pace he must keep. He, being used to
these things,

Placidly follows his work, which is laying his mileage
behind him,

While his passengers placidly sleep, and he, as he nurses
her, sings! . . .

When, with the gale at her heel, the ship lies down
and recovers—

Rolling through forty degrees, combing the stars with
her tops,

What says the man at the wheel, holding her straight
as she hovers

On the summits of wind-screening seas; steadying her
as she drops?

Behind him the blasts without check from the Pole
to the Tropic, pursue him,

Heaving up, heaping high, slamming home, the surges
he must not regard:

Beneath him the crazy wet deck, and all Ocean on end
to undo him:

Above him one desperate sail, thrice-reefed but still
buckling the yard!

Under his hand fleet the spokes and return, to be held
or set free again;

And she bows and makes shift to obey their behest,
till the master-wave comes

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

And her gunnel goes under in thunder and smokes,
and she chokes in the trough of the sea again—
Ere she can lift and make way to its crest; and he, as
he nurses her, hums!

*These have so utterly mastered their work that they work
without thinking;
Holding three-fifths of their brain in reserve for whatever
betide.
So, when catastrophe threatens, of colic, collision, or sinking,
They shunt the full gear into train, and take that small
thing in their stride.*

A COUNTING-OUT SONG

A COUNTING-OUT SONG

WHAT is the song the children sing
When dooryard lilacs bloom in Spring,
And the Schools are loosed, and the games are played
That were deadly earnest when Earth was made?
Hear them chattering, shrill and hard,
After dinner-time, out in the yard,
As the sides are chosen and all submit
To the chance of the lot that shall make them 'It.'

(Singing) 'Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, Mo!
Catch a nigger by the toe!
If he hollers let him go!
Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, Mo!
You--are--It!

Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, and Mo
Were the First Big Four of the Long Ago,
When the Pole of the Earth sloped thirty degrees,
And Central Europe began to freeze,
And they needed Ambassadors staunch and stark
To steady the Tribes in the gathering dark:
But the frost was fierce and flesh was frail,
So they launched a Magic that could not fail.

(Singing) 'Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, Mo!
Hear the wolves across the snow!
Some one has to kill 'em—so
Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, Mo
Make—you—It!

Slowly the Glacial Epoch passed,
Central Europe thawed out at last;

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

And, under the slush of the melting snows,
The first dim shapes of the Nations rose.
Rome, Britannia, Belgium, Gaul—
Flood and avalanche fathered them all;
And the First Big Four, as they watched the mess,
Pitied Man in his helplessness.

(Singing) '*Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, Mo!*
Trouble starts when Nations grow.
Some one has to stop it—so
Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, Mo
Make—you—It!'

Thus it happened, but none can tell
What was the Power behind the spell—
Fear, or Duty, or Pride, or Faith—
That sent men shuddering out to death—
To cold and watching, and, worse than these,
Work, more work, when they looked for ease—
To the day's discomfort, the night's despair,
In the hope of a prize that they never would share.

(Singing) '*Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, Mo!*
Man is born to Toil and Woe.
One will cure the other—so
Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, Mo
Make—you—It!'

Once and again, as the Ice went North,
The grass crept up to the Firth of Forth.
Once and again, as the Ice came South,
The glaciers ground over Lossiemouth.
But, grass or glacier, cold or hot,
The men went out who would rather not,

A COUNTING-OUT SONG

And fought with the Tiger, the Pig, and the Ape,
To hammer the world into decent shape.

(Singing) *'Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, Mo!*
What's the use of doing so?
Ask the Gods, for we don't know;
But Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, Mo
Make—us—It!

Nothing is left of that terrible rune
But a tag of gibberish tacked to a tune
That ends the waiting and settles the claims
Of children arguing over their games;
For never yet has a boy been found
To shirk his turn when the turn came round;
Nor even a girl has been known to say
'If you laugh at me I shan't play.'

For— *'Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, Mo,*
(Don't you let the grown-ups know!)
You may hate it ever so,
But if you're chose you're bound to go,
When Eenee, Meenee, Mainee, Mo
Make—you—It!

FROM
'DEBITS AND CREDITS'

1926

THE CHANGELINGS

THE CHANGELINGS

SEA CONSTABLES

(R.N.V.R.)

OR ever the battered liners sank
With their passengers to the dark,
I was head of a Walworth Bank,
And you were a grocer's clerk.

I was a dealer in stocks and shares,
And you in butters and teas;
And we both abandoned our own affairs
And took to the dreadful seas.

Wet and worry about our ways—
Panic, onset, and flight—
Had us in charge for a thousand days
And a thousand-year-long night.

We saw more than the nights could hide—
More than the waves could keep—
And—certain faces over the side
Which do not go from our sleep.

We were more tired than words can tell
While the pied craft fled by,
And the swinging mounds of the Western swell
Hoisted us heavens-high . . .

Now there is nothing—not even our rank—
To witness what we have been;
And I am returned to my Walworth Bank,
And you to your margarine!

THE VINEYARD

SEA CONSTABLES

AT the eleventh hour he came,
But his wages were the same
As ours who all day long had trod
The wine-press of the Wrath of God.

When he shouldered through the lines
Of our cropped and mangled vines,
His unjaded eye could scan
How each hour had marked its man.

(Children of the morning-tide
With the hosts of noon had died;
And our noon contingents lay
Dead with twilight's spent array.)

Since his back had felt no load,
Virtue still in him abode;
So he swiftly made his own
Those last spoils we had not won.

We went home, delivered thence,
Grudging him no recompense
Till he portioned praise or blame
To our works before he came.

*Till he showed us for our good—
Deaf to mirth, and blind to scorn—
How we might have best withstood
Burdens that he had not borne!*

‘BANQUET NIGHT’

‘BANQUET NIGHT’

‘IN THE INTERESTS OF THE BRETHREN’

‘ONCE in so often,’ King Solomon said,
Watching his quarrymen drill the stone,
‘We will club our garlic and wine and bread
And banquet together beneath my Throne.
And all the Brethren shall come to that mess
As Fellow-Craftsmen—no more and no less.

‘Send a swift shallop to Hiram of Tyre,
Felling and floating our beautiful trees,
Say that the Brethren and I desire
Talk with our Brothers who use the seas.
And we shall be happy to meet them at mess
As Fellow-Craftsmen—no more and no less.

‘Carry this message to Hiram Abif—
Excellent Master of forge and mine:—
I and the Brethren would like it if
He and the Brethren would come to dine
(Garments from Bozrah or morning-dress)
As Fellow-Craftsmen—no more and no less.

‘God gave the Hyssop and Cedar their place—
Also the Bramble, the Fig and the Thorn—
But that is no reason to black a man’s face
Because he is not what he hasn’t been born.
And, as touching the Temple, I hold and profess
We are Fellow-Craftsmen—no more and no less.’

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

So it was ordered and so it was done,
And the hewers of wood and the Masons of
Mark,
With foc'sle hands of the Sidon run
And Navy Lords from the *Royal Ark*,
Came and sat down and were merry at mess
As Fellow-Craftsmen—no more and no less.

*The Quarries are hotter than Hiram's forge,
No one is safe from the dog-whips' reach.
It's mostly snowing up Lebanon gorge,
And it's always blowing off Joppa beach;
But once in so often, the messenger brings
Solomon's mandate: 'Forget these things!
Brother to Beggars and Fellow to Kings,
Companion of Princes—forget these things!
Fellow-Craftsman, forget these things!'*

TO THE COMPANIONS

TO THE COMPANIONS

HORACE, Book V. Ode 17

THE UNITED IDOLATERS¹

How comes it that, at even-tide,
When level beams should show most truth,
Man, failing, takes unfailing pride
In memories of his frolic youth?

Venus and Liber fill their hour;
The games engage, the law-courts prove;
Till hardened life breeds love of power
Or Avarice, Age's final love. ✓

Yet at the end, these comfort not—
Nor any triumph Fate decrees—
Compared with glorious, unforget-
ten innocent enormities

Of frontless days before the beard,
When, instant on the casual jest,
The God Himself of Mirth appeared
And snatched us to His heaving breast.

And we—not caring who He was,
But certain He would come again—
Accepted all He brought to pass
As Gods accept the lives of men . . .

¹ In the Sussex Edition this story appears in Vol. XVII, *Stalky & Co.*

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Then He withdrew from sight and speech,
Nor left a shrine. How comes it now,
While Charon's keel grates on the beach,
He calls so clear: 'Rememberest thou?'

THE CENTAURS

THE CENTAURS'

THE UNITED IDOLATERS¹

UP came the young Centaur-colts from the plains
they were fathered in—

Curious, awkward, afraid.

Burrs on their hocks and their tails, they were gathered
in

Mobs and run up to the yard to be made.

Starting and shying at straws, with sidlings and pling-
ings,

Buckings and whirlings and bolts;

Greener than grass, but full-ripe for their bridlings
and lungings,

Up to the yards and to Chiron they hustled the
colts . . .

First the light web and the cavesson; then the linked
keys

To jingle and turn on the tongue. Then, with cocked
ears,

The hours of watching and envy, while comrades at
ease

Passaged and backed, making naught of these ter-
rible gears.

Next, over-pride and its price at the low-seeming
fence,

Too oft and too easily taken—the world-beheld fall!

¹ In the Sussex Edition this story appears in Vol. XVII, *Stalky & Co.*

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

And none in the yard except Chiron to doubt the
immense,
Irretrievable shame of it all! . . .

Last, the trained squadron, full-charge—the sound of
a going
Through dust and spun clods, and strong kicks, pelted
in as they went,
And repaid at top speed; till the order to halt without
slowing
Showed every colt on his haunches—and Chiron
content!

‘LATE CAME THE GOD’

‘LATE CAME THE GOD’

THE WISH HOUSE

LATE came the God, having sent his forerunners who
were not regarded—

Late, but in wrath;

Saying: ‘The wrong shall be paid, the contempt be
rewarded

On all that she hath.’

He poisoned the blade and struck home, the full bosom
receiving

The wound and the venom in one, past cure or relieving.

He made treaty with Time to stand still that the grief
might be fresh—

Daily renewed and nightly pursued through her soul
to her flesh—

Mornings of memory, noontides of agony, midnights
unslaked for her,

Till the stones of the streets of her Hells and her Paradise
ached for her.

So she lived while her body corrupted upon her.

And she called on the Night for a sign, and a Sign
was allowed,

And she builded an Altar and served by the light of
her Vision—

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Alone, without hope of regard or reward, but un-
cowed,
Resolute, selfless, divine.
These things she did in Love's honour . . .
What is a God beside Woman? Dust and derision!

RAHERE

THE WISH HOUSE

RAHERE, King Henry's Jester, feared by all the Norman Lords
 For his eye that pierced their bosoms, for his tongue
 that shamed their swords;
 Feed and flattered by the Churchmen—well they knew
 how deep he stood
 In dark Henry's crooked counsels—fell upon an evil
 mood.

Suddenly, his days before him and behind him seemed
 to stand
 Stripped and barren, fixed and fruitless, as those leagues
 of naked sand
 When St. Michael's ebb slinks outward to the bleak
 horizon-bound,
 And the trampling wide-mouthed waters are with-
 drawn from sight and sound.

Then a Horror of Great Darkness sunk his spirit and,
 anon,
 (Who had seen him wince and whiten as he turned
 to walk alone)
 Followed Gilbert the Physician, and muttered in his
 ear,
 'Thou hast it, O my brother?' 'Yea, I have it,' said
 Rahere.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

'So it comes,' said Gilbert smoothly, 'man's most immanent distress.

'Tis a humour of the Spirit which abhorreth all excess;
And, whatever breed the surfeit—Wealth, or Wit, or
Power, or Fame—

(And thou hast each), the Spirit laboureth to expel
the same.

'Hence the dulled eye's deep self-loathing—hence the
loaded leaden brow;

Hence the burden of Wanhope that aches thy soul and
body now.

Ay, the merriest fool must face it, and the wisest Doctor
learn;

For it comes—it comes,' said Gilbert, 'as it passes—to
return.'

But Rahere was in his torment, and he wandered,
dumb and far,

Till he came to reeking Smithfield where the crowded
gallows are,

(Followed Gilbert the Physician) and beneath the wry-
necked dead,

Sat a leper and his woman, very merry, breaking
bread.

He was cloaked from chin to ankle—faceless, finger-
less, obscene—

Mere corruption swaddled man-wise, but the woman
whole and clean;

And she waited on him crooning, and Rahere beheld
the twain,

Each delighting in the other, and he checked and groaned again.

'So it comes,—it comes,' said Gilbert, 'as it came when Life began.

'Tis a motion of the Spirit that revealeth God to man
In the shape of Love exceeding, which regards not
taint or fall,

Since in perfect Love, saith Scripture, can be no excess
at all.

'Hence the eye that sees no blemish—hence the hour
that holds no shame.

Hence the Soul assured the Essence and the Substance
are the same.

Nay, the meanest need not miss it, though the mightier
pass it by;

For it comes—it comes,' said Gilbert, 'and, thou seest,
it does not die!'

THE SURVIVAL

HORACE, Book V. Ode 22

THE JANEBITES

SECURELY, after days
Unnumbered, I behold
Kings mourn that promised praise
Their cheating bards foretold.

Of earth-constricting wars,
Of Princes passed in chains,
Of deeds outshining stars,
No word or voice remains.

Yet furthest times receive,
And to fresh praise restore,
Mere breath of flutes at eve;
Mere seaweed on the shore;

A smoke of sacrifice;
A chosen myrtle-wreath;
An harlot's altered eyes;
A rage 'gainst love or death;

Glazed snow beneath the moon;
The surge of storm-bowed trees—
The Caesars perished soon,
And Rome Herself: But these

THE SURVIVAL

Endure while Empires fall
And Gods for Gods make room . . .
Which greater God than all
Imposed the amazing doom?

JANE'S MARRIAGE

THE JANEITES

JANE went to Paradise:
That was only fair.
Good Sir Walter followed her,
And armed her up the stair.
Henry and Tobias,
And Miguel of Spain,
Stood with Shakespeare at the top
To welcome Jane.

Then the Three Archangels
Offered out of hand
Anything in Heaven's gift
That she might command.
Azrael's eyes upon her,
Raphael's wings above,
Michael's sword against her heart,
Jane said: 'Love.'

Instantly the under-
standing Seraphim
Laid their fingers on their lips
And went to look for him.
Stole across the Zodiac,
Harnessed Charles's Wain,
And whispered round the Nebulae:
'Who loved Jane?'

JANE'S MARRIAGE

In a private limbo
Where none had thought to look,
Sat a Hampshire gentleman
Reading of a book.
It was called *Persuasion*,
And it told the plain
Story of the love between
Him and Jane.

He heard the question
Circle Heaven through—
Closed the book and answered:
'I did—and do!'
Quietly but speedily
(As Captain Wentworth moved)
Entered into Paradise
The man Jane loved!

*Jane lies in Winchester, blessèd be her shade!
Praise the Lord for making her, and her for all she made.
And, while the stones of Winchester—or Milsom Street—
remain,
Glory, Love, and Honour unto England's Jane!*

THE PORTENT

HORACE, Book V. Ode 20

THE PROPHET AND THE COUNTRY

OH, late withdrawn from human-kind
And following dreams we never knew!
Varus, what dream has Fate assigned
To trouble you?

Such virtue as commends the law
Of Virtue to the vulgar horde
Suffices not. You needs must draw
A righteous sword;

And, flagrant in well-doing, smite
The priests of Bacchus at their fane,
Lest any worshipper invite
The God again.

Whence public strife and naked crime
And—deadlier than the cup you shun—
A people schooled to mock, in time,
All law—not one.

Cease, then, to fashion State-made sin,
Nor give thy children cause to doubt
That Virtue springs from iron within—
Not lead without.

ALNASCHAR AND THE OXEN

ALNASCHAR AND THE OXEN

THE BULL THAT THOUGHT

THERE's a pasture in a valley where the hanging woods
divide,

And a Herd lies down and ruminates in peace;
Where the pheasant rules the nooning, and the owl
the twilight-tide,

And the war-cries of our world die out and cease.
Here I cast aside the burden that each wear / week-
day brings

And, delivered from the shadows I pursue,
On peaceful, postless Sabbaths I consider Weighty
Things—

Such as Sussex Cattle feeding in the dew!

At the gate beside the river where the trouty shallows
brawl,

I know the pride that Lobengula felt,
When he bade the bars be lowered of the Royal Cattle
Kraal,

And fifteen mile of oxen took the veldt.
From the walls of Bulawayo in unbroken file they
came

To where the Mount of Council cuts the blue . . .
I have only six-and-twenty, but the principle's the same
With my Sussex Cattle feeding in the dew!

To a luscious sound of tearing, where the clovered
herbage rips,
Level-backed and level-bellied watch 'em move—

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

See those shoulders, guess that heart-girth, praise those
loins, admire those hips,

And the tail set low for flesh to make above!

Count the broad unblemished muzzles, test the kindly
mellow skin,

And, where yon heifer lifts her head at call,

Mark the bosom's just abundance 'neath the gay and
clean-cut chin,

And those eyes of Juno, overlooking all!

Here is colour, form and substance! I will put it to
the proof

And, next season, in my lodges shall be born
Some very Bull of Mithras, flawless from his agate hoof

To his even-branching, ivory, dusk-tipped horn.

He shall mate with block-square virgins—Kings shall
seek his like in vain,

While I multiply his stock a thousandfold,

Till an hungry world extol me, builder of a lofty strain

That turns one standard ton at two years old!

*There's a valley, under oakwood, where a man may dream
his dream,*

In the milky breath of cattle laid at ease,

*Till the moon o'ertops the alders, and her image chills the
stream,*

And the river-mist runs silver round their knees!

*Now the footpaths fade and vanish; now the ferny clumps
deceive;*

Now the hedgerow-folk possess their fields anew;

*Now the Herd is lost in darkness, and I bless them as I
leave,*

My Sussex Cattle feeding in the dew!

GIPSY VANS

GIPSY VANS

A MADONNA OF THE TRENCHES

UNLESS you come of the gipsy stock
That steals by night and day,
Lock your heart with a double lock
And throw the key away.
Bury it under the blackest stone
Beneath your father's hearth,
And keep your eyes on your lawful own
And your feet to the proper path.
*Then you can stand at your door and muck
When the gipsy vans come through . . .
For it isn't right that the Gorgio stock
Should live as the Romany do.*

Unless you come of the gipsy blood
That takes and never spares,
Bide content with your given good
And follow your own affairs.
Plough and harrow and roll your land,
And sow what ought to be sowed;
But never let loose your heart from your hand,
Nor flutter it down the road!
*Then you can thrive on your boughten food
As the gipsy vans come through . . .
For it isn't nature the Gorgio blood
Should love as the Romany do.*

Unless you carry the gipsy eyes
That see but seldom weep,

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Keep your head from the naked skies
Or the stars'll trouble your sleep.
Watch your moon through your window-pane
And take what weather she brews;
But don't run out in the midnight rain
Nor home in the morning dews.

*Then you can huddle and shut your eyes
As the gipsy vans come through . . .
For it isn't fitting the Gorgio ryes
Should walk as the Romany do.*

Unless you come of the gipsy race
That counts all time the same,
Be you careful of Time and Place
And Judgment and Good Name:
Lose your life for to live your life
The way that you ought to do;
And when you are finished, your God and your wife
And the Gipsies'll laugh at you!

*Then you can rot in your burying-place
As the gipsy vans come through . . .
For it isn't reason the Gorgio race
Should die as the Romany do.*

THE BIRTHRIGHT

THE BIRTHRIGHT

THE PROPAGATION OF KNOWLEDGE¹

*THE miracle of our land's speech—so known
And long received, none marvel when 'tis shown!*

We have such wealth as Rome at her most pride
Had not or (having) scattered not so wide;
Nor with such arrant prodigality
Beneath her any pagan's foot let lie . . .
Lo! Diamond that cost some half their days
To find and t'other half to bring to blaze:
Rubies of every heat, wherethrough we see
The fiercer and more fiery heart of man:
Emerald that with the uplifted billow vies,
And Sapphires evening remembered skies:
Pearl perfect, as immortal tears must show,
Bred, in deep waters, of a piercing woe;
And tender Turkis, so with charms y-writ,
Of woven gold, Time dares not bite on it.
Thereafter, in all manners worked and set,
Jade, coral, amber, crystal, ivories, jet,—
Showing no more than various fancies, yet
Each a Life's token or Love's amulet. . . . ✓
Which things, through timeless arrogance of use,
We neither guard nor garner, but abuse;
So that our scholars—nay, our children—fling
In sport or jest treasure to arm a King;
And the gross crowd, at feast or market, hold
Traffic perforce with dust of gems and gold!

¹ In the Sussex Edition this story appears in Vol. XVII, *Stalky & Co.*

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

A LEGEND OF TRUTH

A FRIEND OF THE FAMILY

ONCE on a time, the ancient legends tell,
Truth, rising from the bottom of her well,
Looked on the world, but, hearing how it lied,
Returned to her seclusion horrified.

There she abode, so conscious of her worth,
Not even Pilate's Question called her forth,
Nor Galileo, kneeling to deny
The Laws that hold our Planet 'neath the sky.
Meantime, her kindlier sister, whom men call
Fiction, did all her work and more than all,
With so much zeal, devotion, tact, and care,
That no one noticed Truth was elsewhere.

Then came a War when, bombed and gassed and
mined,

Truth rose once more, perforce, to meet mankind,
And through the dust and glare and wreck of things,
Beheld a phantom on unbalanced wings,
Reeling and groping, dazed, dishevelled, dumb,
But semaphoring direr deeds to come.

Truth hailed and bade her stand; the quavering shade
Clung to her knees and babbled, 'Sister, aid!

I am—I was—thy Deputy, and men
Besought me for my useful tongue or pen
To gloss their gentle deeds, and I complied,
And they, and thy demands, were satisfied.
But this—' she pointed o'er the blistered plain,

A LEGEND OF TRUTH

Where men as Gods and Devils wrought amain—
'This is beyond me! Take thy work again.'

Tablet and pen transferred, she fled afar,
And Truth assumed the record of the War . . .
She saw, she heard, she read, she tried to tel
Facts beyond precedent and parallel—
Unfit to hint or breathe, much less to write.
But happening every minute, day and night.
She called for proof. It came. The dossiers grew.
She marked them, first, 'Return. This *can't* be true!
Then, underneath the cold official word:
'This is not really half of what occurred.'

She faced herself at last, the story runs,
And telegraphed her sister: 'Come at once.
Facts out of hand. Unable overtake
Without your aid. Come back for Truth's own sake!
Co-equal rank and power if you agree.
They need us both, but you far more than me!

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

WE AND THEY

A FRIEND OF THE FAMILY

FATHER, Mother, and Me,
Sister and Auntie say
All the people like us are We,
And everyone else is They.
And They live over the sea,
While We live over the way,
But—would you believe it?—They look
upon We
As only a sort of They!

We eat pork and beef
With cow-horn-handled knives.
They who gobble Their rice off a leaf
Are horrified out of Their lives;
While They who live up a tree,
And feast on grubs and clay,
(Isn't it scandalous?) look upon We
As a simply disgusting They!

We shoot birds with a gun.
They stick lions with spears.
Their full-dress is un-.
We dress up to Our ears.
They like Their friends for tea.
We like Our friends to stay;
And, after all that, They look upon We
As an utterly ignorant They!

WE AND THEY

We eat kitcheny food.

We have doors that latch.

They drink milk or blood,

Under an open thatch.

We have Doctors to fee.

They have Wizards to pay.

And (impudent heathen!) They look
upon We

As a quite impossible They!

All good people agree,

And all good people say,

All nice people, like Us, are We,

And everyone else is They:

But if you cross over the sea,

Instead of over the way,

You may end by (think of it!) looking
on We

As only a sort of They!

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE SUPPORTS

ON THE GATE

Song of the Waiting Seraphs

FULL CHORUS.

*To Him Who bade the Heavens abide, yet cease not from
their motion,
To Him Who tames the moonstruck tide twice a day round
Ocean—
Let His Names be magnified in all poor folks' devotion!*

POWERS and GIFTS.

Not for Prophecies or Powers, Visions, Gifts, or
Graces,
But the unregardful hours that grind us in our places
With the burden on our backs, the weather in our
faces!

TOILS.

Not for any Miracle of easy Loaves and Fishes,
But for doing, 'gainst our will, work against our
wishes—
Such as finding food to fill daily-emptied dishes!

GLORIES.

Not for Voices, Harps or Wings or rapt illumination,
But the grosser Self that springs of use and occupation,
Unto which the Spirit clings as her last salvation!

THE SUPPORTS

POWERS, GLORIES, TOILS, and GIFTS.

*(He Who launched our Ship of Fools many anchors gave
us,*

Lest one gale should start them all—one collision stave us.

Praise Him for the petty creeds

That prescribe in paltry needs

Solemn rites to trivial deeds and, by small things, save us!)

SERVICES and LOVES.

Heart may fail, and Strength outwear, and Purpose
turn to Loathing,

But the everyday affair of business, meals, and cloth-
ing,

Builds a bulkhead 'twixt Despair and the Edge of
Nothing.

PATIENCE.

*(Praise Him, then, Who orders it that, though Earth be
flaring,*

And the crazy skies are lit

By the searchlights of the Pit,

Man should not depart a whit from his wonted bearing.)

HOPES.

He Who bids the wild-swans' host still maintain their
flight on

Air-roads over islands lost—

Ages since 'neath Ocean lost—

Beaches of some sunken coast their fathers would alight
on—

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

FAITHS.

*He shall guide us through this dark, not by new-blown
glories,
But by every ancient mark our fathers used before us,
Till our children ground their ark where the proper shore is.*

SERVICES, PATIENCES, FAITHS, HOPES, and LOVES.

*He Who used the clay that clings on our boots to
make us,
Shall not suffer earthly things to remove or shake us:
But, when Man denies His Lord,
Habit without Fleet or Sword
(Custom without threat or word)
Sees the ancient fanes restored—the timeless rites o'er-
take us!*

FULL CHORUS.

*For He Who makes the Mountains smoke and rives the
Hills asunder,
And, to-morrow, leads the grass—
Mere unconquerable grass—
Where the fuming crater was, to heal and hide it under,
He shall not—He shall not—
Shall not lay on us the yoke of too long Fear and Wonder!*

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

UNTIMELY

THE EYE OF ALLAH

NOTHING in life has been made by man for man's
 using
But it was shown long since to man in ages
Lost as the name of the maker of it,

Who received oppression and hurt for his wages—
Hate, avoidance, and scorn in his daily dealings—
Until he perished, wholly confounded.

More to be pitied than he are the wise
Souls which foresaw the evil of loosing
Knowledge or Art before time, and aborted
Noble devices and deep-wrought healings,
Lest offence should arise.

Heaven delivers to Earth the Hour that cannot be
 thwarted,
Neither advanced, at the price of a world or a soul,
 and its Prophet
Comes through the blood of the vanguards who
 dreamed—too soon—it had sounded.

THE LAST ODE

THE LAST ODE

(November 27, 8 B.C.)

HORACE, Book V. Ode 31

THE EYE OF ALLAH

As watchers couched beneath a Bantine oak,
Hearing the dawn-wind stir,
Know that the present strength of night is broke
Though no dawn threaten her
Till dawn's appointed hour—so Virgil died,
Aware of change at hand, and prophesied

Change upon all the Eternal Gods had made
And on the Gods alike—
Fated as dawn but, as the dawn, delayed
Till the just hour should strike—

A Star new-risen above the living and dead;
And the lost shades that were our loves restored
As lovers, and for ever. So he said;
Having received the Word . . .

Maecenas waits me on the Esquiline:
Thither to-night go I. . . .
And shall this dawn restore us, Virgil mine,
To dawn? Beneath what sky?

THE BURDEN

THE GARDENER

ONE grief on me is laid
Each day of every year,
Wherein no soul can aid,
Whereof no soul must hear:
Whereto no end is seen
Except to grieve again—
Ah, Mary Magdalene,
Where is there greater pain?

To dream on dear disgrace
Each hour of every day—
To bring no honest face
To aught I do or say:
To lie from morn till e'en—
To know my lies are vain—
Ah, Mary Magdalene,
Where can be greater pain?

To watch my steadfast fear
Attend mine every way
Each day of every year—
Each hour of every day:
To burn, and chill between—
To quake and rage again—
Ah, Mary Magdalene,
Where shall be greater pain?

THE BURDEN

*One grave to me was given—
To guard till Judgment Day—
But God looked down from Heaven
And rolled the Stone away!
One day of all my years—
One hour of that one day—
His Angel saw my tears
And rolled the Stone away!*

FROM
'LIMITS AND RENEWALS'

GERTRUDE'S PRAYER

GERTRUDE'S PRAYER

(Modernised from the 'Chaucer' of Manallace)

DAYSPRING MISHANDLED

THAT which is marred at birth Time shall not
mend,

Nor water out of bitter well make clean;
All evil thing returneth at the end,

Or elseway walketh in our blood unseer.
Whereby the more is sorrow in certaine—
Dayspring mishandled cometh not againe.

To-bruizèd be that slender, sterting spray

Out of the oake's rind that should betide:
A branch of girt and goodliness, straightway

Her spring is turnèd on herself, and wried
And knotted like some gall or veiney wen.—
Dayspring mishandled cometh not agen.

Noontide repayeth never morning-bliss—

Sith noon to morn is incomparable;
And, so it be our dawning goeth amiss,
None other after-hour serveth well.

Ah! Jesu-Moder, pitie my oe paine—
Dayspring mishandled cometh not againe!

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

DINAH IN HEAVEN

THE WOMAN IN HIS LIFE

SHE did not know that she was dead,
But, when the pang was o'er,
Sat down to wait her Master's tread
Upon the Golden Floor,

With ears full-cock and anxious eyes,
Impatiently resigned;
But ignorant that Paradise
Did not admit her kind.

Persons with Haloes, Harps, and Wings
Assembled and reproved,
Or talked to her of Heavenly things,
But Dinah never moved.

There was one step along the Stair
That led to Heaven's Gate;
And, till she heard it, her affair
Was—she explained—to wait.

And she explained with flattened ear,
Bared lip and milky tooth—
Storming against Ithuriel's Spear
That only proved her truth!

Sudden—far down the Bridge of Ghosts
That anxious spirits clomb—

DINAH IN HEAVEN

She caught that step in all the hosts,
And knew that he had come.

She left them wondering what to do,
But not a doubt had she.
Swifter than her own squeals she flew
Across the Glassy Sea;

Flushing the Cherubs everywhere,
And skidding as she ran,
She refuged under Peter's Chair
And waited for her man.

There spoke a Spirit out of the press,
'Said: 'Have you any here
That saved a fool from drunkenness,
And a coward from his fear?

'That turned a soul from dark to day
When other help was vain;
That snatched it from wanhope and made
A cur a man again?'

'Enter and look,' said Peter then,
And set The Gate ajar.
'If I know aught of women and men
I trow she is not far.'

'Neither by virtue, speech nor art
Nor hope of grace to win;
But godless innocence of heart
That never heard of sin:

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

‘Neither by beauty nor belief
Nor white example shown.
Something a wanton—more a thief;
But—most of all—mine own.’

‘Enter and look,’ said Peter then,
‘And send you well to speed;
But, for all that I know of women and men,
Your riddle is hard to read.’

Then flew Dinah from under the Chair—
Into his arms she flew,
And licked his face from chin to hair
And Peter passed them through!

FOUR-FEET

FOUR-FEET

THE WOMAN IN HIS LIFE

I HAVE done mostly what most men do,
And pushed it out of my mind;
But I can't forget, if I wanted to,
Four-Feet trotting behind.

Day after day, the whole day through—
Wherever my road inclined—
Four-Feet said, 'I am coming with you!'
And trotted along behind.

Now I must go by some other round,—
Which I shall never find—
Somewhere that does not carry the sound
Of Four-Feet trotting behind.

THE TOTEM

THE TIE

ERE the mother's milk had dried
On my lips, the Brethren came—
Tore me from my nurse's side,
And bestowed on me a name

Infamously overtrue—
Such as 'Bunny,' 'Stinker,' 'Podge';—
But, whatever I should do,
Mine for ever in the Lodge.

Then they taught with palm and toe—
Then I learned with yelps and tears—
All the Armoured Man should know
Through his Seven Secret Years . . .

Last, oppressing as oppressed,
I was loosed to go my ways
With a Totem on my breast
Governing my nights and days—

Ancient and unbribable,
By the virtue of its Name—
Which, however oft I fell,
Lashed me back into The Game.

And the World, that never knew,
Saw no more beneath my chin
Than a patch of rainbow-hue,
Mixed as Life and crude as Sin.

THE DISCIPLE

THE DISCIPLE

THE CHURCH THAT WAS AT ANTIOCH

He that hath a Gospel
To loose upon Mankind,
Though he serve it utterly—
Body, soul, and mind—
Though he go to Calvary
Daily for its gain—
It is His Disciple
Shall make his labour vain.

He that hath a Gospel
For all earth to own—
Though he etch it on the steel,
Or carve it on the stone—
Not to be misdoubted
Through the after-days—
It is His Disciple
Shall read it many ways.

It is His Disciple
(Ere Those Bones are dust)
Who shall change the Charter,
Who shall split the Trust—
Amplify distinctions,
Rationalise the Claim,
Preaching that the Master
Would have done the same.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

It is His Disciple
Who shall tell us how
Much the Master would have scrapped
Had he lived till now—
What he would have modified
Of what he said before—
It is His Disciple
Shall do this and more. . . .

He that hath a Gospel
Whereby Heaven is won
(Carpenter, or Cameleer,
Or Maya's dreaming son),
Many swords shall pierce Him,
Mingling blood with gall;
But His Own Disciple
Shall wound Him worst of all!

THE PLAYMATE

THE PLAYMATE

AUNT ELLEN

SHE is not Folly—that I know.
Her steadfast eyelids tell me so
When, at the hour the lights divide,
She steals as summonsed to my side.

When, finger on the pursèd lip
In secret, mirthful fellowship,
She, heralding new-framed delights
Breathes, 'This shall be a Night of Nights!'

Then, out of Time and out of Space,
Is built an Hour and a Place
Where all an earnest, baffled Earth
Blunders and trips to make us mirth;

Whence, from the trivial flux of Things,
Rise unconceived miscarryings,
Outrageous but immortal, shown,
Of Her great love, to me alone. . . .

She is not Wisdom, but, maybe,
Wiser than all the Norns is She: *Or*
And more than Wisdom I prefer
To wait on Her,—to wait on Her!

NAAMAN'S SONG

AUNT ELLEN

'Go, wash thyself in Jordan—go, wash thee and be clean!'

Nay, not for any Prophet will I plunge a toe therein!
For the banks of curious Jordan are parcelled into sites,
Commanded and embellished and patrolled by Israel-
ites.

There rise her timeless capitals of Empires daily born,
Whose plinths are laid at midnight, and whose streets
are packed at morn;
And here come hired youths and maids that feign to
love or sin
In tones like rusty razor-blades to tunes like smitten
tin.

And here be merry murderings, and steeds with fiery
hooves;
And furious hordes with guns and swords, and clam-
berings over rooves;
And horrid tumblings down from Heaven, and flights
with wheels and wings;
And always one weak virgin who is chased through
all these things.

And here is mock of faith and truth, for children to
behold;
And every door of ancient dirt reopened to the old;

NAAMAN'S SONG

With every word that taints the speech, and show that
weakens thought;

And Israel watcheth over each, and—doth not watch
for naught. . . .

But Pharpar—but Abana—which Hermon launcheth
down—

They perish fighting desert-sands beyond Daniascus-
town.

But yet their pulse is of the snows—their strength is
from on high,

And, if they cannot cure my woes, a leper wil I die!

THE MOTHER'S SON

FAIRY-KIST

I HAVE a dream—a dreadful dream—
A dream that is never done.
I watch a man go out of his mind,
And he is My Mother's Son.

They pushed him into a Mental Home,
And that is like the grave:
For they do not let you sleep upstairs,
And you aren't allowed to shave.

And it was *not* disease or crime
Which got him landed there,
But because They laid on My Mother's Son
More than a man could bear.

What with noise, and fear of death,
Waking, and wounds and cold,
They filled the Cup for My Mother's Son
Fuller than it could hold.

They broke his body and his mind
And yet They made him live,
And They asked more of My Mother's Son
Than any man could give.

For, just because he had not died
Nor been discharged nor sick,

THE MOTHER'S SON

They dragged it out with My Mother's Son
Longer than he could stick. . . .

And no one knows when he'll get well—
So, there he'll have to be.
And, 'spite of his beard in the looking-glass,
I know that man is me! ✓

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

THE COINER

(circa 1611)

A NAVAL MUTINY

(To be sung by the unlearned to the tune of 'King John and the Abbot of Canterbury,' and by the learned to 'Tempest-a-brewing.')

AGAINST the Bermudas we foundered, whereby
This Master, that Swabber, yon Bo'sun, and I
(Our pinnace and crew being drowned in the main)
Must beg for our bread through old England again.

*For a bite and a sup, and a bed of clean straw,
We'll tell you such marvels as man never saw,
On a Magical Island which no one did spy
Save this Master, that Swabber, yon Bo'sun, and I.*

Seven months among Mermaids and Devils and
Sprites,
And Voices that howl in the cedars o' nights,
With further enchantments we underwent there.
Good Sirs, 'tis a tale to draw guts from a bear!

'Twixt Dover and Southwark it paid us our way,
Where we found some poor players were labouring a
play;
And, willing to search what such business might be,
We entered the yard, both to hear and to see.

THE COINER

One hailed us for seamen and courteous-ly
Did guide us apart to a tavern near by
Where we told him our tale (as to many of late),
And he gave us good cheer, so we gave him good
weight.

Mulled sack and strong waters on bellies well lined
With beef and black pudding do strengthen the mind;
And seeing him greedy for marvels, at last
From plain salted truth to flat leasing we passed.

But he, when on midnight our reckoning he paid,
Says, 'Never match coins with a Coiner by trade,
Or he'll turn your lead pieces to metal as rare
As shall fill him this globe, and leave something to
spare. . . .'

We slept where they laid us, and when we awoke
'Was a crown or five shillings in every man's poke.
We bit them and rang them, and, finding them good,
We drank to that Coiner as honest men should!

For a cup and a crust, and a truss, etc.

AKBAR'S BRIDGE

THE DEBT

JELALUDIN MUHAMMAD AKBAR, Guardian of Mankind,
Moved his standards out of Delhi to Jaunpore of
lower Hind,
Where a mosque was to be builded, and a lovelier
ne'er was planned;
And Munim Khan, his Viceroy, slid the drawings
'neath his hand.

(High as Hope upsheered her towers to the promised
Heavens above.
Deep as Faith and dark as Judgment her unplumbed
foundations dove.
Wide as Mercy, white as moonlight, stretched her
forecourts to the dawn;
And Akbar gave commandment, 'Let it rise as it is
drawn.')

Then he wearied—the mood moving—of the men and
things he ruled,
And he walked beside the Goomti while the flaming
sunset cooled,
Simply, without mark or ensign—singly, without
guard or guide,
And he heard an angry woman screeching by the river-
side.

'Twas the Widow of the Potter, a virago feared and
known,

AKBAR'S BRIDGE

In haste to cross the ferry, but the ferry-man had gone.
So she cursed him and his office, and, hearing Akbar's
tread,
(She was very old and darkling) turned her wrath upon
his head.

But he answered—being Akbar—'Suffer me to scull
you o'er.'
Called her 'Mother,' stowed her bundles, worked the
clumsy scow from shore,
Till they grounded on a sand-bank, and the Widow
loosed her mind;
And the stars stole out and chuckled at the Guardian
of Mankind.

'Oh, most impotent of bunglers! Oh, my daughter's
daughter's brood
Waiting hungry on the threshold; for I cannot bring
their food,
Till a fool has learned his business at their virtuous
grandam's cost,
And a greater fool, our Viceroy, trifles while her name
is lost!

'Munim Khan, that Sire of Asses, sees me daily come
and go
As it suits a drunken boatman, or this ox who cannot
row.
Munim Khan, the Owl's Own Uncle—Munim Khan,
the Capon's seed,
Must build a mosque to Allah when a bridge is all we
need!

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

'Eighty years I eat oppression and extortion and delays—
Snake and crocodile and fever, flood and drouth, beset my ways.
But Munim Khan must tax us for his mosque whatever befall;
Allah knowing (May He hear me!) that a bridge would save us all!'

While she stormed that other laboured and, when they touched the shore,
Laughing brought her on his shoulder to her hovel's very door.
But his mirth renewed her anger, for she thought he mocked the weak;
So she scored him with her talons, drawing blood on either cheek. . . .

Jelaludin Muhammad Akbar, Guardian of Mankind,
Spoke with Munim Khan his Viceroy, ere the mid-night stars declined—
Girt and sworded, robed and jewelled, but on either cheek appeared
Four shameless scratches running from the turban to the beard.

'Allah burn all Potters' Widows! Yet, since this same night was young,
One has shown me by sure token there was wisdom on her tongue.
Yes, I ferried her for hire. Yes,'—he pointed—'I was paid.'

AKBAR'S BRIDGE

And he told the tale rehearsing all the Widow did and said.

And he ended, 'Sire of Asses—Capon—Owl's Own
Uncle—know

I—most impotent of bunglers—I—this ox who cannot row—

I—Jelaludin Muhammad Akbar, Guardian of Mankind—

Bid thee build the hag her bridge and put our mosque
from out thy mind' . . .

So 'twas built, and Allah blessed it; and, through earthquake, flood, and sword,

Still the bridge his Viceroy builded throws her arch
o'er Akbar's Ford!

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

AT HIS EXECUTION

THE MANNER OF MEN

(ST. PAUL)

I AM made all things to all men—
Hebrew, Roman, and Greek—
In each one's tongue I speak,
Suiting to each my word,
That some may be drawn to the Lord!

I am made all things to all men—
In City or Wilderness
Praising the crafts they profess
That some may be drawn to the Lord—
By any means to my Lord!

Since I was overcome
By that great Light and Word,
I have forgot or forgone
The self men call their own
(Being made all things to all men)
So that I might save some,
At such small price, to the Lord,
As being all things to all men.

I was made all things to all men,
But now my course is done—
And now is my reward—
Ah, Christ, when I stand at Thy Throne
With those I have drawn to the Lord,
Restore me my self again!

THE THRESHOLD

THE THRESHOLD

UNPROFESSIONAL

IN their deepest caverns of limestone
They pictured the Gods of Food—
The Horse, the Elk, and the Bison—
That the hunting might be good;
With the Gods of Death and Terror—
The Mammoth, Tiger, and Bear.
And the pictures moved in the torchlight
To show that the Gods were there!
But that was before Ionia—
(Or the Seven Holy Islands of Ionia)
Any of the Mountains of Ionia,
Had bared their peaks to the air.

The close years packed behind them,
As the glaciers bite and grind,
Filling the new-gouged valleys
With Gods of every kind.
Gods of all-reaching power—
Gods of all-searching eyes—
But each to be wooed by worship
And won by sacrifice.
Till, after many winters, rose Ionia—
(Strange men brooding in Ionia)
Crystal-eyed Sages of Ionia
Who said, 'These tales are lies.

'We dream one Breath in all things,
That blows all things between.
We dream one Matter in all things—
Eternal, changeless, unseen.

'That the heart of the Matter is single
Till the Breath shall bid it bring forth—
By choosing or losing its neighbour—
All things made upon Earth.'

But Earth was wiser than Ionia
(Babylon and Egypt than Ionia)
And they overlaid the teaching of Ionia
And the Truth was choked at birth.

It died at the Gate of Knowledge—
The Key to the Gate in its hand—
And the anxious priests and wizards
Re-blinded the waking land;
For they showed, by answering echoes,
And chasing clouds as they rose,
How shadows could stand for bulwark
Between mankind and its woes.

It was then that men bethought them of Ionia
(The few that had not all forgot Ionia)
Or the Word that was whispered in Ionia;
And they turned from the shadows and the
shows.

They found one Breath in all things,
That blows all things between.
They proved one Matter in all things—
Eternal, changeless, unseen;
That the heart of the Matter was single
Till the Breath should bid it bring forth—
Even as men whispered in Ionia,
(Resolute, unsatisfied Ionia)
Ere the Word was stifled in Ionia—
All things known upon earth!

NEIGHBOURS

NEIGHBOURS

BEAUTY SPOTS

THE man that is open of heart to his neighbour,
And stops to consider his likes and dislikes,
His blood shall be wholesome whatever his labour,
His luck shall be with him whatever he strikes.
The Splendour of Morning shall duly possess him,
That he may not be sad at the falling of even.
And, when he has done with mere living—God bless
him!—
A many shall sigh, and one Woman shall grieve!

But he that is costive of soul toward his fellow,
Through the ways, and the works, and the woes of
this life,
Him food shall not fatten, him drink shall not mellow;
And his innards shall brew him perpetual strife.
His eye shall be blind to God's Glory above him;
His ear shall be deaf to Earth's Laughter around;
His Friends and his Club and his Dog shall not love
him;
And his Widow shall skip when he goes under-
ground!

THE EXPERT

BEAUTY SPOTS

YOUTH that trafficked long with Death,
And to second life returns,
Squanders little time or breath
On his fellow-man's concerns.
Earnèd peace is all he asks
To fulfil his broken tasks.

Yet, if he find war at home
(Waspish and importunate),
He hath means to overcome
Any warrior at his gate;
For the past he buried brings
Back unburiab!e things—

Nights that he lay out to spy
Whence and when the raid might start;
Or prepared in secrecy
Sudden blows to break its heart—
All the lore of No Man's Land
Moves his soul and arms his hand.

So, if conflict vex his life
Where he thought all conflict done,
He, resuming ancient strife,
Springs his mine or trains his gun,
And, in mirth more dread than wrath,
Wipes the nuisance from his path!

THE CURÉ

THE CURÉ

THE MIRACLE OF SAINT JUBANUS

LONG years ago, ere R—lls or R—ce
Trebled the mileage man could cover;
When Sh—nk's Mare was H—bs—n's Choice,
And Bl—r—ot had not flown to Dove:
When good hoteliers looked askance
If any power save horseflesh drew van—
Time was, in easy, hand-made France,
I met the Curé of Saint Juvans.

He was no babbler, but, at last,
One learned from things he left unspoken
How in some fiery, far-off past,
His, and a woman's, heart were broken.
He sought for death, but found it not,
Yet, seeking, found his true vocation,
And fifty years, by all forgot,
Toiled at a simple folk's salvation.

His pay was lower than our Dole;
The piteous little church he tended
Had neither roof nor vestments whole
Save what his own hard fingers mended:
While, any hour, at every need
(As Conscience or La Grippe assailed 'em),
His parish bade him come with speed,
And, foot or cart, he never failed 'em.

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

His speech—to suit his hearers—ran
From pure Parisian to gross peasant,
With interludes North African
If any Légionnaire were present:
And when some wine-ripe atheist mocked
His office or the Faith he knelt in,
He left the sinner dumb and shocked
By oaths his old Battalion dealt in. . . .

And he was learned in Death and Life;
And he was Logic's self (as France is).
He knew his folk—man, maid, and wife—
Their forebears, failings, and finances.
Spite, Avarice, Devotion, Lies—
Passion ablaze or sick Obsession—
He dealt with each physician-wise;
Stern or most tender, at Confession.

.
To-day? God knows where he may lie—
His Cross of weathered beads above him:
But one not worthy to untie
His shoe-string prays you read—and love him!

SONG OF SEVENTY HORSES

SONG OF SEVENTY HORSES

THE MIRACLE OF SAINT JUBANUS

*ONCE again the Steamer at Calais—the tackles
Easing the car-trays on to the quay. Release her!
Sign—refill, and let me away with my horses.
(Seventy Thundering Horses!)
Slow through the traffic, my horses! It is enough—it is
France!*

Whether the throat-closing brick-fields by Lille, or
her pavés
Endlessly ending in rain between beet and tofacco;
Or that wind we shave by—the brutal North-Easter,
Rasping the newly-dunged Somme.
(Into your collars, my horses!) It is enough—it is France!

Whether the dappled Argonne, the cloud-shadows
packing
Either horizon with ghosts; or exquisite, carved
Villages hewn from the cliff, the torrents behind them
Feeding their never-quenched lights.
(Look to your footing, my horses!) It is enough—it is
France!

Whether that gale where Biscay jammed in the corner
Herds and heads her seas at the Landes, but defeated
Bellowing smokes along Spain, till the uttermost head-
lands
Make themselves dance in the mist.
(Breathe—breathe deeply, my horses!) It is enough—
it is France!

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

Whether the broken, honey-hued, honeycombed
limestone

Cream under white-hot sun; the rosemary bee-bloom
Sleepily noisy at noon and, somewhere to Southward,
Sleepily noisy, the Sea.

(Yes, it is warm here, my horses!) It is enough—it is
France!

Whether the Massif in Spring, the multiplied lacets
Hampered by slips or drifts; the gentians, under
Turbaned snow, pushing up the heavens of Summer—
Though the stark moors lie black.

(Neigh through the icicled tunnels: 'It is enough—it
is France!')

HYMN TO PHYSICAL PAIN

HYMN TO PHYSICAL PAIN

(Mr. C. R. Wilkett's Version)

THE TENDER ACHILLES

DREAD Mother of Forgetfulness,
Who, when Thy reign begins,
Wipest away the Soul's distress,
And memory of her sins.

The trusty Worm that dieth not—
The steadfast Fire also,
By Thy contrivance are forgot
In a completer woe.

Thine are the lidless eyes of night
That stare upon our tears,
Through certain hours which in our sight
Exceed a thousand years:

Thine is the thickness of the Dark
That presses in our pain;
As Thine the Dawn that bids us mark
Life's grinning face again.

Thine is the weariness outworn
No promise shall relieve,
That says at eve, 'Would God 'twere morn!'
At morn, 'Would God 'twere eve!'

LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS

And when Thy tender mercies cease
And life unvexed is due,
Instant upon the false release
The Worm and Fire renew.

Wherefore we praise Thee in the deep,
And on our beds we pray
For Thy return that Thou may'st keep
The Pains of Hell at bay!

THE PENALTY

THE PENALTY

THE TENDER ACHILLES

ONCE in life I watched a Star;
But I whistled, 'Let her go!
There are others, fairer far,
Which my favouring skies shall show.'
Here I lied, and herein I
Stood to pay the penalty.

Marvellous the Planets shone
As I ranged from coast to coast;
But beyond comparison
Rode the Star that I had lost.
I had lied, and only I
Did not guess the penalty!

When my Heavens were turned to blood,
When the dark had filled my day,
Furthest, but most faithful, stood
That lone Star I cast away.
I had loved myself, and I
Have not lived and dare not die!

AZRAEL'S COUNT

UNCOVENANTED MERCIES

Lo! the Wild Cow of the Desert, her yeanling estrayed
from her—

Lost in the wind-plaited sand-dunes—athirst in the maze
of them.

Hot-foot she follows those foot-prints—the thrice-
tangled ways of them.

Her soul is shut save to one thing—the love-quest con-
suming her.

Fearless she lows past the camp, our fires affright her
not.

Ranges she close to the tethered ones—the mares by
the lances held.

Noses she softly apart the veil in the women's tent.

Next—withdrawn under moonlight, a shadow afar
off—

Fades. Ere men cry, 'Hold her fast!' darkness recovers
her,

She the love-crazed and forlorn, when the dogs threaten
her,

Only a side-tossed horn, as though a fly troubled
her,

Shows she hath heard, till a lance in the heart of her
quivereth.

—Lo, from that carcass aheap—where speeds the soul
of it?

Where is the tryst it must keep? Who is her pandar?
Death!

AZRAEL'S COUNT

Men I dismiss to the Mercy greet me not willingly;
Crying, 'Why seekest Thou *me* first? Are not my kin
unslain?'

Shrinking aside from the Sword-edge, blinking the
glare of it,

Sinking the chin in the neck-bone. How shall that
profit them?

Yet, among men a ten thousand, few meet me other-
wise.

Yet, among women a thousand, one comes to me
mistress-wise.

Arms open, breasts open, mouth open—hot is her need
on her.

Crying, 'Ho, Servant, acquit me, the bound by Love's
promises!'

Haste Thou! He waits! I would go! Handle me
lustily!'

Lo! her eyes stare past my wings, as things unbeheld
by her.

Lo! her lips summoning part. *I* am not whom she
calls.

Lo! My sword sinks and returns. At no time she heed-
eth it

More than the dust of a journey, her garments brushed
clear of it.

Lo! Ere the blood-rush has ceased, forward her soul
rushes.

She is away to her tryst. Who is her pandar? Death!

THE END

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AND
LATER SONGS FROM BOOKS
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